THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

FOUNDED, A.D. 1821

THE GREAT PIONEER FAMILY PAPER OF AMERICA.

Vol. 66. PUBLICATION OFFICE No. 716 SANSOM ST. PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, JANUARY 15, 1887. $1.50 A YEAR IN ADVANCE. FIVE CENTS A COPY. No. 27

AS TIME GOES ON.

BY J. R. E.

At thirty years, it is enough for me
To know I am not what I hoped to be!
It is enough, storm-beaten on the plain,
To view the splendid heights I cannot gain—
Low down, to miss the music of the spheres—
At thirty years!

The half of life has passed, and half remains:
One effort more, O soul, to break the chains
Of circumstance! to fill this page of Time
With characters of glory, and to climb
The steep ascent, with songs in place of tears,
At thirty years!

The clouds will pass; the sun will dazzle thro'
On rose-flushed pinnacles that pierce the Blue:
O deep dismay, to loiter on the plain—
Irresolute, to grieve at toil and pain—
To be the slave of sloth and sordid fears,
At thirty years!

SISTER OR WIFE?

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A BROKEN WEDDING RING," "THORNS AND BLOSSOMS," "WHICH LOVED HIM BEST?" ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VI.

WITHOUT the lady, it was the very opening for which Swift would almost have given one of his ears. But with—— Yes, even as the realisation of this crossed his mind, he could not help thinking how very good and constant it was of him to think of giving all up for Fern's sake.

"I think I'd better see your father myself," he said, after a pause. "These arrangements are best left to men, you know. I wish——"

"You wish that I had never interfered in this at all," interrupted Sibyl, expressing exactly the thought that he had in his mind. "So do I now, you ungrateful man! But if it hadn't been for me you'd never have had the offer. They would much rather it was Tom Bingham, and he loves me to distraction. Only I cared most for you, and I thought—I did think you liked me just a little!"—gazing up with pathetic eyes, as loving as and more unreasoning than a dog's.

He strode up and down the room two or three times. Then he drew a light wicker-chair close to her side and sat down.

"Now, look here, Sibyl," he began—"you've been very kind and good in the matter, I have not a doubt. I have always thought you a dear, sweet, lovable little thing. But you shouldn't mix up love and business matters like this you know."

The girl sat up, dried all her tears suddenly, and flung back the long dark hair which had tumbled over her face.

"Then if we leave the business alone?" she suggested eagerly.

He was silent, in reality thinking deeply, but to all appearance absorbed only in making the points of all his fingers exactly meet.

"You don't love me, then?"—the large eyes once more suffused with tears.

But Swift felt excessively disinclined to commit himself in any way. Of course he intended to remain true to Fern! Still Sibyl Wetherley was a handsome girl, and she had other attractions besides her looks. Neither, were he to go into partnership with her father and to do his own share of work, would he be living upon any one's money except his own rightful earnings. Who could call that marrying for money?

So he had argued the matter out to himself during those few quiet moments. And, although the share in the business was dependent upon his marriage with Sibyl, and although there could be no fear of his deserting Fern—so he phrased it—still he came to the conclusion that it would be better not to say too much just now.

"I am certainly not going to tell such a story as that dear," he replied, with a smile that made her heart beat faster. "But I am going to settle all the rest of the business part of the affair—which you must not trouble your pretty head about—with your father."

"You care for the horrid old partnership a great deal more than you do for me!" she pouted.

And, though he would on no account deny the impeachment, he stooped and once more brushed her lips with his dark moustache.

"Don't you be so impatient!" he laughed, gaily enough.

Then he left the house, breathing a sigh of relief as he did so to know that his future was still in his own hands, and that he had yet time to determine what he should do with it.

And this was the man for the sake of whose feelings four people were almost breaking their hearts in England!

* * * * *

It was a very pale, weary looking Fern who, early the next morning, took her way through the park, out at the big iron gate, and down to the village post-office in order to despatch with her own hand the letter to Swift Levick which she had sat up nearly all night to write. It never even occurred to Mr. Meynell's daughter that such a proceeding as a solitary walk to the small grocer's could be anything but a natural course of action for any one, or that by night-time half the gossips in the place would be commenting on this the first appearance in public of the Countess of Somerton.

Poor Fern! Her heart was very heavy, and, in spite of all the trouble she had taken to keep the sheet smooth and spotless, the paper she carried was all blistered and smeared and blotted by the tears which had been shed over it.

"It will get to him in about a month, I suppose," she murmured with a heavy sigh, as she pushed it through the narrow slit in the window and listened for the faint thud which was sure to follow as it reached the box below.

Then she turned homeward, shivering a little in the keen November wind as she looked up at the huge ancient building which now was her home, and thought of Swift, struggling on alone and poor in a foreign land. She imagined his sufferings when he should receive her letter and understand that they two were parted forever. And again she sighed. But somehow she did not meditate much upon her own side of the question. Instead she quickened her steps perceptibly, when a sudden recollection that by this time her husband might be awake and expecting her dawned upon her mind.

"Fern, you must have a sealskin jacket." That was the Earl's decree as, all rosy and fresh from her walk, she stooped to kiss him. "See how cold and red these poor little fingers are! I ought to have thought of it before."

"As though you could whilst you were so ill!"

"Well at any rate I have now, so will you go to town and buy one to-day?"—with a smile.

"Oh, Ernest!"

"Well, dear?"—rather languidly. The effect of yesterday's excitement had not yet altogether gone.

"I haven't the faintest idea what you would like. Oh, could'nt I wait until you could go too?"

Never had such a ray of profound joy shot through Lord Somerton's heart as at that moment.

But he said nothing, only drew her closer to him with one hand, and kissed the chill fingers.

"It's very nice of you to wish me to help you choose, love," he returned, speaking as carelessly as he was able; "but you can scarcely wait for your wrap until I'm fit for railway travelling, I fear! Suppose we have a lot sent down here, and you try them on in this room and let me watch and admire?"

And so it came about that, in the course of two or three days, a huge box arrived from London, full of lovely furs, and that the husband and wife spent a whole long merry afternoon in making their selection.

"That's the nicest," said the Earl at last decisively, pointing to a long beautiful coat of darkest seal, trimmed deeply with exquisite sable-tails.

"Yes, I think so too. But imagine the price!" she returned, looking at it longingly however, and passing her hand almost affectionately over the glossy fur and the scarcely harsher crimson plush which formed the lining.

He laughed at her a little less feebly than would have been the case a few days previously. He was recovering very fast now.

"Haven't you found out that you are a rich woman yet dear?"

"I have not thought much about the matter, I'm afraid," she owned, blushing faintly. "Still, it does seem rather dreadful to give a hundred and fifty guineas for one garment, doesn't it Ernest?"

"Good for trade, love! Put it on now, with the muff and hat that go with it, and let me tell you what I think of the Countess of Somerton."

She slipped her arms into it obediently, then walked to the glass to complete her toilette.

When she turned to him again he held out both his hands and drew her close without a word, gazing with all his soul at the picture made up of rosy cheeks and shining hair and brown costly furs.

"Well, and what is your lordship's opinion? I am waiting to hear," she asked mischievously.

"I can't tell you," he replied, in a choked, husky voice. "My Fern, my own wife! Oh, that I could make you happy?"

She stooped and kissed his lips, touched to the heart. Perhaps she might have tried to comfort him had not a knock at the door interrupted them.

"Mrs. Meynell, my lady."

"Where, Jones?"—raising herself and speaking quickly. Something in the man's voice rather startled her.

But before he could answer he was hidden behind the tall figure of Fern's step-mother, who, followed closely by a crabbed-looking person in violet ribbons and curls, swept into the room.

"I am here, my dear," she announced, for the servant. "I would not allow the butler to take me anywhere else, for my business is with the Earl."

"But he cannot see visitors. How can you behave so? And you are not even alone," cried the girl, not offering to shake hands with either of the ladies, but standing with outstretched arms in front of the bed, as though to ward off the intruders.

"As to my behavior, Fern I shall answer for it to no one, not even to the Countess of Somerton, with all her airs. It is only Miss Dent who is with me, and I should advise you to go away and leave us to explain our errand to your husband without you.

"Mrs. Meynell, I think that you forget that I am in my own house!" she said with so calmly dignified a tone that her step-mother stared, and even her husband was astonished. "However I will overlook your rudeness if you choose to go downstairs, and I shall be happy to talk there to you both. But you must not remain here."

"She guesses what we have come for, my dear," murmured Miss Dent, nudging her friend. "Fern, Fern, how sadly pained and grieved your dear mother and I feel!"

The Earl touched his wife's arm.

"Let me hear what it is love," he whispered, laughing up into her bewildered face. "I am really very well, and I fancy it will be rather a joke."

"I have not the least idea to what you allude, Miss Dent. But if you will be good enough to sit there"—pointing to two chairs at some distance—"My husband will listen to what you have to say," said Lady Somerton.

She herself sank down into a low seat close to the bedside, and the ladies followed her example, shaking their heads and heaving the most portentous sighs.

"Of course, Fern, if you will remain, you will! But I am so utterly upset that I scarcely know how to begin in your presence," said her step-mother, applying her handkerchief to her perfectly tearless eyes. And Miss Dent added—

"I wouldn't have believed it of you, Fern, unless I had seen it with my own eyes."

"If you will kindly tell Lady Somerton at once what it is, over which you are sorrowing so deeply it will be better," observed a sarcastic voice from among the pillows.

Miss Dent sat more upright than ever, her little curls waggling about. But it was Mrs. Meynell who first found her tongue.

"I hesitate because I am afraid of giving you a shock, my dear Somerton. Pray, pray compose your nerves!"

"Ah, yes, you have every need! It is all very sad. But we would on no account do anything to increase your sufferings."

"You will certainly make him ill soon between the two of you!" cried Mrs. Levick, who, almost hidden amongst the curtains on the other side of the bed, had hitherto remained unnoticed in the rapidly waning light.

"Well, then, if I must! Are you aware, Somerton—ah, it is really most painful to ask it!—that my daughter, who is also your wife, went down to the village about a week ago, upon foot, to post a letter which she wished no one else to see?"

"And that it was absolutely addressed to Mr. Swift Levick, her old lover—and she a married woman?" supplemented the spinster, in jerks of indignation.

The Earl was squeezing his wife's hand as hard as his feeble strength would allow in order to keep her still. He was anxious to see how far their malicious tongues would carry them.

"Yes. And it is entirely owing to my dear friend, Miss Dent, to whom I'm sure we can never be sufficiently grateful, that I am able to tell you all this. Still I cannot—no, I cannot say that I am surprised! From a child she has been wilful and disobedient—so different from my sweet Clarice, now. Ah, what a wife she would have made you, young as she is! But don't let what we have said quite break your heart. I dare say that the poor girl will improve under your care, Ernest dear, if I may call address you so?"

"I should prefer to be called by my proper title, Mrs. Meynell, certainly, except by my intimate friends."

"Oh, of course if you wish it! But there, I must not be vexed with you. It is natural enough that you should be annoyed at such a disclosure. I assure you that the whole village is talking of her wickedness, and sympathising with you. And when I entreated her so earnestly the very day of the wedding not on any account to become your wife, even for a moment—as it was expected it would be then—if she preferred Swift Levick in her heart——"

"Did you? I never heard you, then!" cried Fern, exasperated by this last touch beyond all power of self-control.

"Oh, it is natural enough that you should prefer to forget it, Fern! But it is true, notwithstanding. Even that very night I seemed to have a presentiment. You remember, I mentioned it to you afterwards, Letitia? And my presentiments always come true."

"Yes, you did," assented her friend. "But, my dear, have we not stayed long enough? We have put Lord Somerton upon his guard, and I really don't know what more we can do."

"You can wait and listen to me," interposed the deep weak voice from the bed—"you who dare to come here and try to sow distrust between husband and wife. I know that Lady Somerton went herself to the post. I know to whom her letter was addressed. I had even given permission for it to be written. I don't think that every one in the village is talking such scandal, because I believe it is only foolish busybodies who would not have more sense! But, please understand, Mrs. Meynell, that, until I am well again, which will not be for a long time, I cannot request the pleasure of more of your society. As to your friend, I know nothing of her, and must own that I do not desire the honor."

How the mischief-making women got out of the house they never precisely knew. But when once again they were walking along the avenue they breathed more freely.

"What an excessively rude young man! I fear that coming into the earldom has in no way improved him, Letitia!"

"Well, poor fellow," responded the other, "do you know, I really almost forgave him. Of course nobody could believe a word that he said about having known of the correspondence. Still it was quite too noble of him to stick up as he did for his worthless young wife. Why could he not have cast his thoughts upon a person of discreet age and been spared all this pain?"

"Oh, of course everyone knows that Miss Dent would gladly have been Countess of Somerton, only that unfortunately the Earl never looked at her! But you will please remember that the lady you have just described as worthless is my dear daughter!" cried Mrs. Meynell, only too glad to have found a vent for her rage.

"I'm sure I wish you joy of the connection, my dear. Not to mention a hope that you will get over your jealousy that Clarice is not——"

"I fancy our roads lie apart," interrupted the other. "I don't believe that you ever saw clearly what the address upon Fern's letter was, and so I shall tell every one. I am sorry that I ever allowed you to bring me up here upon this fool's errand. But I wish you good evening now."

"Allowed me to bring you!"—with a loud jarring laugh. "And it was I who could not be ready soon enough to suit you! But I'm glad enough, believe me, to turn my back upon you and all your creditable relatives! Good night."

Mrs. Meynell however was already out of earshot.

This was the letter which had created such a storm in a tea-cup, and which the mail steamer was by that time carrying out to Calcutta—

"My darling Swift,—This is the last letter that I shall ever be able to write to you beginning like that; for, oh, my dearest, I am married! It is not his fault, and I believe it is not altogether mine. If I could only make you understand! If you were only here that I might tell you all! He was wounded in the park by a man who had stolen the locket you gave me. (I don't return that, Swift. I can't, unless you say so. It is all I have remaining of our engagement.) Then the doctors said he must die. And, as he meant to leave me all his money, Swift, he wanted me just to have his name as well. Every one said it would no harm, and that you would not mind; and he was dying because of what he had done for me, you know. So they all persuaded me that it was the right thing—and I was married to him.

"Ever since then he has been getting better; and I am his wife. Can you forgive me? Ah, Swift—my dear, dear Swift, how I love you! He has always been my dear brother: but you"—here a great blot. "I can't write any more. I wish I could bear the sorrow altogether and not give you any pain. And yet I can't really want—and I don't think you would want—him not to recover. Would you, Swift?

"This is to say good-bye to you, my love. I shall never write like this to you again, for he is my husband, and I will try to be a good wife. Won't you help me, dear? And please send me one little line to say that you forgive me. "FERN.

"P.S.—Of course you know it is Ernest that I mean."

It was pathetic and touching enough in its incoherence and grief. But Lady Somerton was mistaken in thinking that it would be in Swift's hands in a few weeks. He did not see it, or the pile of other letters which went out by the same mail, for many months, and by then the whole number had taken more voyages than one.

For, even whilst Fern was grieving her tender heart over her own picture of his disappointment, and wishing with all her soul that she could by any personal sacrifice heal the wound her conduct must cause him, Swift Levick was seated in the merchant's private room, face to face with Sibyl Wetherley's yellow grim old father.

"I want you to believe, Mr. Wetherley, that I by no means desire to take advantage of what your daughter hinted to me concerning your generous intentions," Fern's lover was saying. "Still, as she appeared to think that you had some thought of taking me into partnership, and as really that was scarcely a question to discuss with a lady, why, you must pardon me if I have come straight to the fountain-head for information."

For all the old man's vulgar wife and personal coarseness Mr. Wetherley was able in a measure to appreciate the conduct of a gentleman. And, as he listened to Swift's carefully cautious account of his own feelings and actions, the flowing periods—conscientiously learned by rote previously, as being altogether non-committal—went to his heart. He allowed to himself that, after all, Sibyl might have done much worse than select this man, who used such beautiful language and gave voice to such irreproachable sentiments, for her husband. The blue-gray eyes which had really won her he never even noticed.

But of his much improved opinion he did not tell Swift. Instead he asked—

"And did my girl give hints as to anything more pleasant than mere business?"

The young man hesitated, flushing to the roots of his hair. His companion saw his confusion, and was amused.

"Ah, you understand each other!" he observed, with a chuckle. "And I'm not going to say that I'm sorry either. Bless you, man, don't look so hot! I never heard that women cared for modest sweethearts yet. As for me, I can't stand a chap that blushes!"

Swift laughed a little, uncomfortably enough, to hide his confusion. He would have given a good deal to know exactly how Mr. Wetherley understood the facts of the case. Was he under the impression that he had made Sibyl an offer? But his employer went on deliberately again, after a pause—

"You see, Levick it is in this way. I've no son, only this girl of mine, whom, though you mightn't think it of me, I dearly love. In fact, I'm regularly soft about my little Sillie."

The younger man thought that it was the most admirably suitable name that he had ever heard, although at the same time he wondered at the tremor which had come into her father's voice.

Hitherto he had believed that the old merchant possessed no more heart than a brickbat, and in his astonishment he muttered something that sounded like—"Very creditable indeed, I'm sure."

Luckily however the sole representative of the firm of Wetherley, Mentard, Coward and Co. was too much absorbed in his own thoughts to notice the queer remark.

"So I want to see her happily married to the man she loves," he continued; "and though I'll honestly own Levick, that you are not the fellow I had fixed on in my own mind, still that can't be helped. If she prefers you to Bingham—there, I didn't mean to let his name out, but no matter—as I was saying, if she cares for you more than for Tom, and she says she does, well she shall have you, in spite of your not having a halfpenny. I like you, so I tell you, although I have only known you for such a short time. And I had a good recommendation too with you from England, when first you came. It was, I remember from the late Lord Somerton, was it not?"

"Yes."

"Did you know him?"

"Not at all. But the present Earl is my dearest friend. It was he who was to have come out with me, you recollect?"

"Ah, yes! So I do now that you name it. And you know him intimately, you say? Well, well!" He paused, visibly impressed. Then he continued—"I quite appreciate your delicacy and gentlemanly feeling in not having yet said very much to my daughter, Levick. She gave me to understand—you see, I treat you confidentially—that you had told her that you must see me before you could press her for an answer to your wishes. Still, of course, it has been easy for any one to make out with half an eye how the land lay between you for some time past"—with another laugh. "Now that you have my consent don't delay any longer. Go in and win, and luck go with you. You'll both have to be on your way to England in another fortnight or so."

"To England!"

Swift sprang to his feet with something very like a shout, throwing up his arms as though casting off a heavy load. No one but himself knew how he loathed the heat and strangeness of India, or how he longed once more to be at home.

Mr. Wetherley laughed good humoredly.

"Why, I thought you said you knew!"

"No, Sibyl—I beg your pardon, Miss Wetherley—told me that it was you and her mother who were going, and that we—I—I mean——"

He stopped in confusion to the other man's very visible delight.

"She'd got hold of the wrong end of the story—just like a woman," he said. "I never mean to cross the water again as long as I live. Its you—I—I mean"—mocking Swift's own stammer—"who will have to go."

"To live there?"

"Certainly!"

Before she went to sleep that night Miss Wetherley had given the order for her wedding-gown to the leading dressmaker in Calcutta.

It was to be of the thinnest white silk gauze, draped with some exquisite old lace and trimmed with pearls, and must be ready, she explained, in a fortnight as the latest. Nearly all the rest of the trousseau she and Mrs. Wetherly decided should be purchased in London. So there was absolutely nothing to delay the marriage. The deeds of partnership were drawn up ready to be signed upon the wedding-day, immediately after the ceremony.

And thus it was that, just about five months after the evening when, with Fern Meynell's kisses still hot upon his lips, Swift had stood upon the deck of the Amazon watching the shores of England receding in the twilight, Mr. and Mrs. Levick left Calcutta en route for home again.

Three days afterwards the Countess of Somerton's letter arrived and was refused at the house Swift had already left.

CHAPTER VII., AND LAST.

"OH, Ernest, it is nice to see you so much better!"

For it was nearly two months now since his injuries were inflicted, and the Earl of Somerton, wrapped in a dressing-gown, was lying upon a big soft sofa at his dressing-room window, gazing out at the snowy prospect. By his side sat his wife, her fingers busily engaged upon a velvet smoking-cap ultimately intended for his adornment. In spite of all the strange events which had brought about their union, at that moment the husband and wife looked happy and contented enough.

Fern as she spoke, looked up from her work with merry eyes at Ernest's still not very robust form. And at the very instant although the young lady was quite unconscious of the fact, the Earl succeeded, with the hand which he had passed round her neck, extracting the first hair pin amongst her thick, shining coils.

"It is thanks to you love that I am so well, dear," he returned, smiling at her, and at the same moment dropping her possession upon the carpet behind. "Our marriage began my cure, and your nursing has, thank Heaven, kept me alive since—or so the doctors declare!"

"Dear old fellow!"—putting up her hand and stroking the thin cheek. "You are a very nice sort of person, Ernest, take you all round!"

He laughed, but the unthinking gladness faded from his face.

"Oh, love, believe it always! Give me at least as much affection as a brother can have."

The girl cast down her eyes, blushing deeply.

"I wish—I knew—that Swift—wasn't unhappy," she said unsteadily.

Her husband's eyes, in which something like hope was slowly kindling, never left her face.

"Why?"

"Because perhaps then—I might be able to forgive myself—if I were to love you better than——"

"A telegram, my lady."

And Lord Somerton managed to stifle a very ugly word as Fern held out her hand towards the silver salver and took up the envelope.

Then she turned it over, looked at it on both sides, and finally read aloud the direction it bore.

"I wonder whom it is from," she exclaimed, as the servant went out and closed the door.

"A good way to know would be to open it and see," suggested her husband laughing.

"But it's for you, Ernest, and I dare not give it up in case it should be some blow for your nerves," hiding it behind her and glancing into his face mischievously.

"Read it yourself then, little Curiosity, if that's what you want."

"And suppose it should be secrets!" opening her eyes wide.

"Then you'll know them, won't you? Which ought to make you very happy," he retorted slyly getting hold of the one hairpin still left, and after which he had been struggling for some time.

A bright wavy mass fell over her, far below her waist, as she tore open the cover. And she turned her face towards him reproachfully as she tossed back the shining hair.

"You tease! And I really believed I had fastened it up so tightly to-day that even you couldn't bring it down without letting me feel it."

Then she unfolded the pink paper and read.—

"Arrived in London yesterday. Want to talk to you. Will you give me some luncheon? Do not let any one know.

SWIFT LEVICK."

There was a dead silence as her voice ceased. At last she cried—

"Oh, Ernest! Then he must have left before the letters reached him. He cannot have heard yet."

If possible her husband was even paler than herself. He looked helplessly into her agitated face, framed in the chestnut hair, then fell back amongst his pillows, powerless to do more than groan out—

"Oh, Swift, Swift!"

But the girl was again examining the message.

"'Want to talk to you,' he says. I hope he is not in any trouble. And why are you not to let any one know, I wonder?"

Ernest raised his head and regarded her rather curiously. But she did not notice, only went on again after a moment or two.

"And I should like to know what is bringing him back again so soon." Then a sudden wave of something like nervous fear passing over her, she sank upon her knees, and hid her face in the folds of her husband's dressing gown. "Oh, Ernest, what will he say? How can we tell him?"

Even as the words passed her lips the door opened once more, almost before she had time to spring to her feet, and the butler's voice announced—

"Mr. Levick, my lord!"

The telegram had been delayed in transmission, and it actually was Swift who stood once more before them.

"Why, dear old man," he exclaimed, coming forward with outstretched hands and a gleam of genuine concern in his eyes, "whatever is the matter? Have you been ill or what? And you here too, Fern, to take care of him? But that's of course you, kind little sister!"—kissing her lightly and quite as a natural thing, upon her forehead.

She shrank away, blushing scarlet, whilst Swift rattled on in a manner which would have seemed too gay to be natural had there been any one present sufficiently composed to have observed it.

"Ah, how good it is to see your faces again, you two," he continued. "And how utterly delightful the snow here is, after that awful India. You can enjoy a fire like this"—rubbing his hands in front of the great pile of blazing logs on the hearth—"all the better after having been in a country where you dared not think of anything likely to make you warmer. Oh, what a time I have had of it, and how thankful I am to get back? But Somerton, I want to know about yourself. How is it that I find you looking like this?"

"Then you have not heard of the assault and robbery and all that in the park here? I should have thought you would almost have seen that in the newspapers before you started," the Earl answered, trying to keep his voice steady, and all the time pondering how he could deal that blow which yet must certainly fall at last.

"Never read them! You know I never could. And everybody's letters, including this young lady's"—with a smile at Fern—"stopped just a fortnight before we—re—re—I mean I left. So you see I'm all in the dark, and am eager for enlightenment!"

"Oh, but it is you who are the traveller, so we look to you to open your budget first!" laughed the other man as carelessly as he could, striving still a little longer to ward off the evil moment.

"Oh, my news are soon told! You behold before you the junior partner in the firm of Messrs. Wetherley, Mentard, Coward & Co. There's luck, old fellow! We haven't done so badly after all—now have we? You an Earl, and I a rich man with a share in a prosperous house?"

Fern sat as in a dream, and listened silently. So this man who talked so fast and loud was Swift—her Swift—come back again to claim her. Would she, even if she could, leave Ernest for him? And how could she help it if her innermost heart responded "No"?

"You have been fortunate indeed, old fellow. How did you manage it?" questioned his friend, whose pale face was by this time almost twitching with anxiety and dread.

But then Swift's eyes fell and his tongue stopped. So strange did he look that the husband and wife glanced at each other in astonishment. At last he raised his head and gazed straight into the two faces that were again turned towards him.

"It's got to come, I suppose," he blurted out awkwardly enough, "and there's no particular good that I could ever see in mincing matters. I meant to let you know on the quiet, though, Ernest. Still, Fern must hear sooner or later, and it may as well be now. I'm married! My wife was Sibyl Wetherley!"

"Married!"

It was Lord Somerton, not Fern, who echoed the word. She had only turned very red in her surprise, and began to tremble a little.

Even at the very moment of hearing it, she was conscious of a vague uncertainty as to what she really did feel upon the subject.

Curiously enough her husband was the indignant person.

"I thought you were engaged to Fern?" he cried hotly, raising himself upon his elbow, and scanning Swift with flashing eyes.

Again the young man's eyes fell.

"So I was. But it was for such a short time, and I took her so entirely by surprise when I asked her to promise to wait for me. I have never felt quite sure that she really loved me, though of course I supposed she did." Then, rising and going towards her—"I hope it won't hurt you very much, Fern. You see it was greatly to my interest to become a partner, and I knew I could not do that," he went on, with a seriousness which had something comic in it, "without taking Sibyl into the bargain. Otherwise there's no doubt that I would rather have married you."

"And that is the way men put their interest before their love! I wonder you dare try to excuse yourself to the woman you have used so ill! I'm ashamed of you, Swift, and I'm surprised at you too."

"You had better, far better, have accepted my offer and never gone out at all! I did think that I knew you pretty thoroughly, but it seems that I was mistaken," stormed the Earl, not daring in his delicacy even to turn his eyes upon Fern. How she must feel this man's falseness, he thought.

But at this moment she laid her hand upon his arm.

"Hush, Ernest! You will injure yourself dear," she said. "Besides, really——"

"That was a perfectly different thing, Fern, as you very well know. But a self-interested affair like this—ha's. I've no patience with him!"

"So it seems, old man. There, Fern, let him alone. I deserve it all, and more. But it is you who ought to blame me dear"—lowering his voice almost to a whisper. "I know I have behaved like a brute in giving you so much pain."

He stooped and tried to kiss her lips.

"Swift!"—drawing herself away haughtily enough for a princess.

"Well!"

"I thought that you said you were married?"

"So I did. What of it?"

"Why——" and she paused, blushing beautifully.

Swift laughed merrily.

"My dear child, do you really and truly suppose that a marriage of convenience such as mine has been—though Sibyl thinks enough of me, I own, poor girl!—can prevent me from caring about the feelings of any other woman? There is no reason why I should not kiss you. Who has a better right?"

"My husband."

She said it boldly, standing up and facing him with a very determined proud look upon her face.

She was not pretty—nothing like so handsome as Sibyl, Swift told himself. But she was fresh and genuine and sweet and gentle, all of which he by this time saw his wife was not. Above all, she was the woman whom still, in his heart and in his own peculiar fashion, he loved. And she was talking of her husband!

Swift Levick started violently. Then he felt that he had been too hasty. He must have misunderstood her. Who was there that she could have married in the short time since last he had heard from her? And he laughed a little again by way of reassuring himself.

"Of course, when you get one, dear! Still, such things as husbands are not to be had every day in the week, and until you find yours I mean still to claim my right," he replied.

Could this coarse-minded man be the Swift that they had both known and loved? Had the lack of home influences so told upon him already? The thought passed through the mind of the husband as well as of the wife whilst together they listened to his words. The Earl would have silenced him long before, but for an imploring glance and pressure on his arm, which had kept him still. Fern wished to hear all that her quondam lover had to say. Now as he paused she spoke simply enough.

"I am married, Swift, already. Ernest is my husband."

"I don't believe you, Fern! You would not have dared to play me so false," he ejaculated in his absolute astonishment.

But here at last Lord Somerton did interpose.

"You had better remember, Swift, that Fern has never said one word to reproach you. And our wedding must have been a very different affair from yours, I should fancy."

"An Earl and a merchant! I should think it must! Oh, Fern has chosen well! She understood upon which side her bread was buttered," he returned bitterly, stamping up and down the room in a fury.

"I think you had better sit down and hear the story," observed the Earl more gently, interpreting Swift's irritation as a form of injured love, which indeed it was—self-love!

"Hear the story of her deceit? No, thank you; I will not wait another moment in this house, the price of her falsehood! I shall doubtless be able to get any further details from the Vicarage. They'll tell me the truth without trying to hide her fault there, I've no doubt."

And before another word could be uttered he had rushed out of the room and down the stairs, leaving the husband and wife alone together.

Ah, if he had but realised what he had done!

The scene had been altogether too much for Fern's gravity. She did not stay to analyse her feelings or to wonder at the cause of the strange light-heartedness she felt. Instead she burst out into such a peal of laughter as Ernest had not heard from her for many long weary months.

"Oh, what droll creatures men are!" she gasped out as soon as she could speak. "It is dreadfully wicked of me to laugh so, I know, but if you could only have seen yourself raging at Swift on my behalf, and then him at me, and each for doing exactly what the other had done! Oh, Ernest, do laugh too—you can't think how funny it was!"

But he did not even smile. Instead he stared.

"I can't make you out, Fern," he said at last. "I expected that, loving him so much, you'd have been almost broken-hearted in spite of your own marriage. I'm not such a fool as to think that saying few words here at my bedside one day could alter all the feelings of your heart! But now you seem able to see only the comic side of the whole business, and are laughing like this!"

But she was serious enough by this time, and reddening hotly to the tips of her ears. At first she covered her face with her hands. Then, as she still seemed to feel his gaze, she slid down from her chair to the floor, crouching low at his side, and again trying to shelter herself amidst the folds of his dressing-gown.

"What is it dear?"

He asked the question very softly, moving his fingers amongst the lovely mass of hair that was flowing all over his chest and hands.

But she did not raise her face. Instead, he heard in a smothered voice from among the folds—

"Can't you guess, Ernest?"

Then there was a silence.

She lifted her head at last and looked at him. He had become as white as the pillows upon which he was lying, but there was a light in his eyes which she had never seen there before.

Yet still for a moment he did not speak. Then he said, rather faintly—

"No, I will not. Can you tell me, my love?"

She nestled her face against his own as murmured—

"I'm afraid you've lost your sister, Ernest!"

He turned, and, catching her in his arms, drew her to his breast. There was nothing between them now.

"Then have I gained my wife, Fern?" was all he said.

And she, with her lips upon his, just whispered—

"Yes."

Deserted.

BY HENRY FRITH.

I MUST go without breakfast as usual," I said to myself, as I sprang out of bed one morning, and glancing at my watch found it was half-past eight. My train left at nine, and I lived half a mile from the station. I threw on my clothes, and ran downstairs; there was no landlady waiting in the passage with a cup of tea and bread and butter, as was usually the case.

"Ah," thought I, "she has overslept herself too." I found a crust of bread, however, and dashed out of doors, and down the street with my coat on my arm. I glanced as I passed at a certain window at No. 15, where a smiling face usually greeted me; but she too, had overslept herself. As I ran along I noted that the streets were unusually silent, even for our quiet neighbourhood, and once I stopped and looked at my watch, feeling sure there must be something wrong in the time. But no; five minutes to nine, and from the height of the sun I knew I could not be much mistaken.

"Perhaps," I said, "I am awfully late," when, as I drew near the station, I saw no one running to catch the train. Usually about a dozen of us in various stages of undress rushed up at the last moment, and finished our toilet and breakfast in the car.

The signals were down, and I heard the engine blowing off steam. There was no one in the station as I ran through (I had a season ticket) and reached the platform and bolted into the last car.

"Ah," I exclaimed, "just in time!" But the car was empty. It still wanted two minutes to nine, so I did not heed my companions' absence, but proceeded to finish dressing, expecting every moment to see them arrive. But they did not come. I looked out of the window; there was no one on the platform.

"This is strange," I said. I stepped out and walked the length of the train. No passengers! no conductor! I went back to the ticket office; nobody there! I was greatly puzzled at so unusual a circumstance as an empty train, and not a soul stirring about the station. I walked back again and stood by the engine. Suddenly a thought struck me.

"Ten past nine; I must get to the city; I'll drive there myself!"

I don't know what madness possessed me at that moment, nor did I think of the consequences. I jumped on the engine and sounded the whistle. A shrill, unearthly shriek it was, but there was no human response to my challenge. Then I turned on the steam cautiously, and started the engine. Slowly the train steamed out of the station; but, I suppose excited by the motion, I turned on more steam, and the train went faster and faster, until I was flying along at full speed. I passed two stations, but at the speed I was driving I could not see if any one was there.

After passing the second station I shut off steam, as the next was a junction, usually our first stopping place. The train drew slowly up, and I looked eagerly to see if that too was deserted. The silence in the place when the train had stopped was painful; there was no sign of life. A down train stood at a farther platform; I crossed the line to it; that too was deserted. The car doors were open, and I looked into one and saw a newspaper on the seat.

I took it up; it was that morning's paper. I began to feel alarmed; the terrible, weird solitude oppressed my spirits, and I was glad to walk back to my train again.

Once more I started, but drove more cautiously, as I was getting near the city. No sign of life could I see anywhere, and I was compelled to keep my thoughts from dwelling on the subject lest terror should overmaster me.

I reached Broad street at last. The usually busy station was silent and deserted. If I felt a dread at being out in the open, the feeling was intensified here. I left the train and ran into the street.

I feared lest the building should fall on me. The hollow roof echoed to my flying footsteps; it was as though some mighty giant was pursuing me.

The streets were equally deserted and silent. A flock of pigeons rose from the pavement as I ran out; two or three cabs were standing in the yard, the horses drooping their heads to the ground. They pricked up their ears when they heard me, whinnied softly, and came towards me.

I walked on down Broad street, the horses following me. Some of the shops were open, some closed, in some the shutters had been partly taken down and left at the door.

I entered one shop and called loudly; I passed through to the dwelling behind; the table was laid for breakfast, but the fire had gone out, and masses of gray ashes hung in heavy flakes on the half-burnt coals.

On the stairs I found a baby's shoe, as though dropped by some one in haste. In a bedroom was a candle overturned, the blanket and coverlet dragged across the floor.

I turned and went back to the street. Four cabs stood at the door. The horses looked around eagerly as I came out; poor brutes! they were glad of human companionship.

I walked down the street, the cabs following. Then I got on a hansom and drove slowly along, looking everywhere to find some fellow-creature.

As I went I heard the rumble of vehicles and the clatter of hoofs, and from every bye-street came cabs, vans, drays, and horses, all joining in the procession that followed.

It was a strange and curious sight; but I could scarce keep down the feeling of terror that began to oppress me. I tried to fix my thoughts on the scene before; tried not to realize the rows of tenantless houses that mocked me on either side.

From this time till the catastrophe that happened I seemed to act more from instinct than reason.

I reached the Bank; here, I thought, if anywhere, I should find some human being. The doors were open, and I passed on in.

"All this wealth is mine," I thought, "if there is no one else in town."

But the feeling of terror that had come over me once before when under a roof, drove me out into the street again. Again mounting the cab, I proceeded to the river. I now noticed what I had not observed before, that all the clocks had stopped at ten minutes passed eight.

I entered a church and sat down; there the silence was the stillness of death. I have before now sat there and fancied the distant roar of the traffic to be the beat of waves upon the rocky cliffs of the sea! But now the throbbing of my heart was all the sound I heard, and even that seemed to rouse an echo in the lofty dome.

I could not stay long in one place, and presently walked on. The horses that had hitherto followed me, now took no notice of my presence, but stood with drooping heads.

Feeling hungry, I took some cakes from a baker's shop, and then went to the Walnut street pier. There I found a steamer. It got up steam and went down the river.

Past rows of ships and deserted warehouses; in some places the cranes still held their burdens suspended in mid air; goods lay about the wharves and on the decks where the laborers had dropped them. Deserted barges were coming up with the tide, as though panic-stricken crews had left them to their fate. Everywhere silence. I turned back again and ran up the river. The wind blew softly, and ten thousand sparkling suns danced on the waves.

I landed and went up Chestnut street. Here I found a saddled horse, mounted him and rode to the depot.

The railway station presented the same aspect of desertion, with its rows of empty car and piles of baggage.

Suddenly—in a moment—the sun was blotted out from the sky. Intense darkness rushed down on me, as though a heavy pall had been thrown over my head. Had I seen one star, one faint sparkle of light, it would not have been so terrible. But this darkness was palpable; it seemed to choke me; it drove horrible fears into my brain. I stood up and stretched out my hands; weird shapes seemed to float around me; I fancied I heard whisperings; my knees began to tremble; a cold sweat broke out over my body; I reeled like one who is struck, and fell down, down through space!

I must have lost consciousness before I reached the ground, for I felt no shock. When I began to come to myself I heard voices, and I felt hands touch me. I tried to speak, to move, to open my eyes, but all power of motion had fled.

"He is dead!" said one.

"Yes, quite dead!" said another.

Then they put me down. Though my eyes were shut, I could see, could feel that I was in a coffin. I tried to shriek, I tried to move—in vain. Then they put on the lid.

What were my feelings as I lay there, keenly alive in every sense but that of motion! I still heard voices, but they were muffled and distant; then they began to drive the nails: they were nailing me down alive! I made another desperate effort, and turned on my side; I uttered a loud scream, and woke. My landlady was knocking at the bedroom door.

"Half-past seven, sir!"

CONFERRING KNIGHTHOOD.—The ceremony of conferring the order of knighthood at the hands of the Queen is not imposing. It is not, in fact, a public ceremonial, and only those are permitted to witness it who, by their official connection with the Queen's household, may attend her. The loyal subject upon whom such distinguished honor may be conferred may not even invite his "best man," nor the members of his personal circle of relatives or friends, to be present.

Arrayed in whatever uniform he may be entitled to wear, or whatever dress Court etiquette and the time of day make proper, if he be a civilian, the subject presents himself before his Sovereign and kneels at her royal feet.

Seated on the throne chair, the Queen lays the shining blade of a sword across the shoulder of the kneeling but exalted beneficiary, and says, using the title with which she is about to give, "Arise, Sir So-and-so." Plain Mr. Brown is thus by a single stroke of her Majesty's sword, transformed into Sir Knight So-and-so, and he is permitted, perchance, to kiss his Sovereign's fingertips in grateful acknowledgment of the distinguished honor.

In other cases than this of a plain knighthood, and when the titles carries with it a decoration, the gracious Queen, with her own royal hands, pins the glittering and much coveted bauble upon the coat of her elevated subject.

Bric-a-Brac.

THE WHITE MAN'S FLY.—It is a curious fact that the honey-bee—"the white man's fly" the Indians used to call it—was never known in the United States till brought from England; and, though it is now found in all parts of the country, it did not reach California until 1850, and South America until 1845.

IN THE PAST.—A light is thrown on the pleasures of traveling by coach in the "good old times" by the fact that on a night journey fellow-travelers would sometimes lash themselves together, the right arm of the one to the left arm of the other, as a safeguard against rolling off the top of the coach when overcome by sleep.

THE SPOUTING OF WHALES.—Whales do not spout water. They spout vapor or breath. When a whale spouts, his "spout-hole," as whalers call it, is always above water. The enormous volume of the whale's breath, expelled suddenly into the different temperature of the air, causes the white bush-like vapor to remain suspended for a moment, like the steam from a locomotive. The only time a whale spouts liquid is when he has been mortally pierced by a lance, and then he spouts warm blood. The sound of a whale's spouting is like the roar of a locomotive blowing off steam.

"THE FIRST HERRING.—The arrival of "the first herring" at Vlaardingen is a great event in Holland, and is duly chronicled in the Dutch Journals. This pioneer of "the great fisheries," as the Dutch call their herring-trade, appeared a short time ago. The selected fish, the first-fruits of the herring-harvest, is always solemnly declared to be "the property of the King of the Netherlands." The fishermen would look upon it as a sort of treason and impiety for any lesser Dutchman to eat it. The fish is wrapped in a silken flag bearing the national colors and conveyed along the road in solitary grandeur to the royal palace at the Hague.

THE HEAD OF THE HOUSE.—The ladies of Albert Durer and Berghem the artists were both shrews. The wife of Durer compelled that great genius to do the hourly drudgery of his profession, merely to gratify her own sordid passion; in despair, Albert ran away from his Tisiphone; she wheedled him back, and not long afterwards this great artist fell a victim to her furious disposition. Berghem's wife would never allow that excellent artist to quit his occupations: and she contrived an odd expedient to detect his indolence. The artist worked in a room above her: over and anon she roused him by thumping a long stick against the ceiling, while the obedient Berghem answered by stamping his foot, to satisfy Mrs Berghem that he was not napping.

UNLUCKY MAIDENS.—Bulgaria has been largely in men's minds and mouths during the last few months, but very few can realize the almost barbaric superstitions that characterize the immense bulk of the people. When there is a very severe drought, the villagers meet in conclave, and select the prettiest of their maidens. She is led to an open space and covered over with long willow palms. When she is quite hidden, the entire village arms itself with all the receptacles which will hold water, and for a prolonged space of time pour the contents of their jugs over the hardly dealt with young woman. Meantime they chant appeals in Bulgarian to the clemency of the divinities in whom their ancestors believed. If it does not rain within a very short time, the position of the drenched Bulgarian beauty must be anything but a comfortable one.

THE BRACELET.—The modern udjeha is said to be of French origin, and is described as a bracelet, made in a variety of ways with a charm or talisman attached to it, or engraved upon it, supposed to be Egyptian heiroglyphics. It is said that the original Egyptian udjeha, or bracelet, was a large coin, covered with hieroglyphics, sometimes enamelled, and sometimes set in costly gems. This coin was attached to a narrow metal band or bracelet, and being once put on was never to be removed from the wearer's arm. It is stated that these talismanic bracelets have been found on the arms of mummified Egyptians, princesses of all ages, ranging from ten years upwards. As the bracelet was not to be removed after it was once put on, the young Egyptian girl at first wore it upon her arm near the armpit, and as she grew in size the bracelet was slipped down, until, at her full growth, it reached the wrist. This is the legend concerning the udjeha, and whether strictly true or not, it helps to make the bracelet an interesting object to the girls of the period.

THE TALMUD.—The Talmud is a collection of Jewish traditions, which have been orally preserved. It comprises the Mishna, which is the text, and the Gemara, its commentary. The whole forms a complete system of the learning, ceremonies, civil and canon laws of the Jews, treating, indeed, on all subjects, even gardening, manual arts, etc. The rigid Jews persuade themselves that these traditional explications are of divine origin. The Pentateuch, say they, was written out by their legislator before his death in thirteen copies, distributed among the twelve tribes, and the remaining one deposited in the ark. The oral law Moses continually taught in the Sanhedrim, to the elders and the rest of the people. The law was repeated four times; but the interpretation was delivered only by word of mouth from generation to generation. In the fortieth year of the flight from Egypt, the memory of the people became treacherous, and Moses was constrained to repeat this oral law, which had been conveyed by successive traditionists.

AN UNCROWNED LIFE.

BY S. E. W.

Through laden clouds as the sun goes down
There comes a blaze of dazzling gold,
Like a parting smile through a life-long frown,
Or a promised hope to the dying told:
A promised hope, through life held aloof,
With grief at the flood, and joy at the ebb;
A skeleton warp with the ravelled woof,
As incomplete as Penelope's web.

And yet unlike, for he faithfully wove,
And his shuttle crossed with its widest scope,
With a slender woof, but a shred of love,
Or the faintest thread of a trembling hope.
But he wove, and he wove as the days went on,
And fate unravelled his threads each night;
And the days, and hours, and years are gone,
Till a sunset gleams in its golden light.

'Tis the dying glow—as the fates relent—
A halo over his drooping head;
For the strength that wields the shuttle is spent,
Just as it sheets a last golden thread;
A golden thread in the sullen sky
Kisses the clouds to a crimson red;
A gleam of hope in the dull, dull eye,
And the shuttle drops—and the weaver is dead.

FOR LOVE OF HER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LIKE UNTO A STAR," "BRUNA'S STORY," "A GIRL'S DESPAIR," "TWICE MARRIED," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE result of the inquest held at the "Royal George" was a nine days' wonder. It was in everyone's thoughts, on everyone's tongue.

Not in the memory of the oldest inhabitant had there been such a sensation in the quiet little country town; never had there been so much comment and discussion over afternoon tea, across the counter, and in the workshop.

The Kinsleys were too well known in Berkeley for the smallest thing connected with them not to be of interest, and poor Maud's part was so conspicuous a one that her name had been more often mentioned than it had ever been before.

The deepest sympathy was expressed for her, and for her brother, and although the general opinion of Arnold Graeme was that he was guilty, there were many who were sorry for the young man, who during his stay at Ivyholme, had made himself very popular by his gentleness and never-failing courtesy.

The general feeling was that he was guilty.

Mr. Home's evidence had been cleverly put together; the testimony of the handkerchief was conclusive, and as the days went by the feeling deepened.

No other evidence was forthcoming; no suspicion was aroused against anyone else; and, save for Maud's sake, the country-folk were by no means averse to the guilty man receiving the due punishment of his misdeed.

The Winter Assizes at Ilchester were held in the middle of December, and, always a period of some excitement, were looked forward to now with even more concern than usual, and were the subject of incessant conversation and conjecture.

It was said that the first counsel in the land had been engaged to defend Mr. Graeme; that Doctor Kinsley had vowed that he would spend his last penny in proving his innocence; that his son was broken-hearted at his friend's position, and that his anxiety and sorrow had made him very ill.

The servants at Ivyholme were objects of much attention just now, but they had nothing to tell, and even if they had they were far too faithful and devoted to the interests of the family they served to divulge it.

Life at Ivyholme went on without any apparent change, except that Gilbert was kept to his room by a species of low fever, which had its origin partly in the chill he had received on the night of his encounter with Joe Kirby in the park, and partly from remorse, and anxiety, and distress.

In this illness it was but natural that Maud should be his nurse, and she was constantly with him.

It was an intense relief to the girl to be able for a while to put off the mask of ease and gaiety she was obliged to wear in Gwendoline's presence, and let the tears come to relieve her burning, aching eyes: and Gilbert, too, liked to have with him the only person who knew his secret.

Not that they exchanged many confidences; Gilbert was too weak to talk for any length of time, and Maud either read to him, or while he slept cried away some of the pain at her heart.

Gwendoline's distress at Arnold Graeme's position was sufficiently deep to show her sister how she would have suffered if she had learned the truth, and if the brother, whom she loved and of whom she was so proud, had been at his place in Ilchester Gaol. She utterly refused to believe in Graeme's guilt, and Maud's engagement to him had been carefully kept from her, so that all her sympathy was for Arnold, so falsely accused, and for Gilbert, whose anxiety for his friend had been great enough to make him ill.

Doctor Kinsley himself went about his work with a stern, inscrutable face which told nothing, even to those who knew him best.

From him, of course, it was impossible to conceal anything that had transpired at the inquest, and though he had not spoken to his daughter on the subject, his manner to her had sufficient coldness to show that he was seriously displeased.

Altogether, into Maud Kinsley's sunlit life the rain had began to fall, and the dark and dreary days to come. Hitherto it had been so happy that Maud had grown used to the sunshine, and resented any shadow upon her path, but now her trouble only brought out the true nobility of her nature, and the high courage and endurance which as yet had been only latent.

Of course the greater part of the Berkeley gossip had no foundation, save in the minds of the gossips themselves. It was entirely untrue that Doctor Kinsley had avowed his belief in the innocence of his son's friend, and that he had declared that he would spare no expense to prove it. On the contrary, although he was studiously silent on the subject, he held rather a strong opinion that Arnold was guilty, and his chief grounds for doing so was his son's extreme grief, and the anxiety he could not conceal.

Gilbert, the astute physician argued, knew Arnold Graeme better than anyone, and if he, notwithstanding his constant assertion that Arnold was innocent, grieved so intensely as to seriously affect his health, he must believe him guilty, otherwise he would have more faith in his innocence being made evident to all.

Doctor Kinsley had liked the artist well: he had deemed him gentle, honorable and true, and it was a source of real sorrow to him that he should have proved himself unworthy.

But of one thing he was more than determined. However the matter ended, whether the grand jury threw out the bill, or whether he was acquitted or condemned, Maud should not be his wife. Whatever her feeling towards him was, even if she loved him with a great love, Doctor Kinsley was determined that the beautiful daughter of whom he was so proud should not be sacrificed to a man who had so little to offer her, except a stained name and a dishonored future; and the doctor little guessed how strong Maud's determination was to compensate Arnold Graeme for the suffering he had chosen to bear for her sake.

It seemed to the girl that no other feeling but the one Arnold had expressed for her could have induced him to act so generously, with such utter disregard of self.

No friendship for Gilbert, no gratitude for the hospitality he had received at Ivyholme could have been strong enough for that; and Maud had felt that the debt they owed him was chiefly her own, and her anxiety to pay it was intense. She longed to see Arnold.

She knew that, save for a brief interview with her father, which had been painful to both, he had seen no one save Mr. Gifford, who, as Doctor Kinsley's friend and solicitor, had been to him, and had left him considerably surprised and somewhat vexed at having been refused any confidence by the young man whom he wished to befriend, and in whom, for Maud's sake, he was deeply interested.

And not only was he surprised and vexed—he was puzzled.

There was something in Gilbert's manner which had impressed him, a strange hopelessness which was very different from the quiet composure and calmness he had shown at the inquest.

He had been grateful for the old lawyer's interest and offers of assistance, and had declined the latter gently, gratefully, but quite firmly; at least, for the present, he said.

He had not time to realize his position; in a few days he would be calmer, and better able to look in the face, and then perhaps he might ask Mr. Gifford to spare him a few minutes, and he would be grateful.

Save for the Kinsleys, Graeme was utterly friendless in England.

He had many friends in the artists' circle in Rome, but they could be no help to him in his dilemma; and when Mr. Gifford's advances had been rejected, Arnold felt singularly friendless and desolate.

But it was not his position which troubled him most—at least, not so far as it concerned himself—his own share in this trouble affected him but little; but he was sorely anxious for the woman he loved, and the friend who was dear to him.

He dreaded the trial with a great dread, which grew and strengthened as his solitary confinement gave him leisure and opportunity for thought.

He felt that neither Maud nor her brother could stand a lengthened cross-examination by a skilful lawyer bent on knowing the truth; he feared lest under such an ordeal they both would fall, and all the suffering he had striven to save them would fall upon them with its misery increased a thousandfold.

Gilbert would have to bear not only the punishment of his sin, but the odium of having allowed another to suffer his stead; an odium which Graeme felt would be a thousand times more shameful, more painful to endure than what he was enduring now.

That he suffered in his incarceration was undoubted, but he at least had the consciousness of his innocence to sustain him, and that gold band on his little finger, which Maud had placed there, and which brightens the person for him as a gleam of golden sunshine brightens a very dark place.

But notwithstanding such aids as these, he was terribly anxious, and the utter helplessness which he could not but realize to the full now, was almost maddening.

He lived in daily, hourly dread of some discovery taking place which would prove his innocence and Gilbert's guilt, and so plunge into misery the family whom he wished to spare.

The days passed slowly and heavily as well to the prisoner at Ilminster Castle—for the gaol was a picturesque, ivy-grown castle which was in excellent preservation as well as the walls of the old town—as to Maud in her pretty, luxurious home; but perhaps he to whom they passed most slowly of all and most heavily was Ivor, Lord Dereham, for he had not only his own trouble to bear—and that was great—but Maud's.

How sorrowfully and how tenderly he thought of her during those dull November days, no one but himself could know, no one could even guess, save the faithful old servant who had been about him since his earliest childhood, and who loved him truly and served him faithfully.

To him the young man's pale, haggard looks and listless, languid movements were eloquent of weariness and unrest, and he was too keen-sighted not long ago to have fathomed the earl's interest in Maud Kinsley and her love for her.

To Nicholas Dalton the thought of a marriage between the Earl of Dereham and Doctor Kinsley's daughter could not fail to seem a mesalliance, and he viewed with regret.

In his eyes, a princess of the blood royal would not have been too highly placed for his lord; but with all his pride in him, his love was even stronger than his pride, and if a marriage with Maud would make him happy, Nicholas would have reconciled himself to it easily enough.

Moreover, she was unusually beautiful and graceful, and she had an imperial grace about her which the valet appreciated to the full.

He had never imagined for a brief second of time that his master's suit would be unsuccessful until that inquest at the "Royal George," when Maud's softly spoken words had cut the earl to the heart; and that Lord Dereham should suffer for her sake seemed to the faithful old servant as great a revolution as if the world had turned upside down!

That the earl suffered, and keenly, was evident, notwithstanding all his efforts; he looked pale, haggard, worn; he seemed to take little or no interest in his usual pursuits.

His hunters were eating their heads off in his stables, as the stud groom indignantly remarked; and once Nicholas, coming quietly into the library, found him with his arms crossed upon the writing table and his head bowed upon them in an attitude of intense dejection.

Lord Dereham had made no effort to see Arnold Graeme; he had sent him a few courteous lines, asking if he could be of any service to him, and making profuse and sincere offers of assistance; but Arnold had answered cordially enough, yet declining the offer.

To Ivyholme the earl never went now, he could not force himself to see Maud; the remembrance of her in the death-like swoon, which had followed her parting with Graeme, was always before him; the pale, beautiful face which had lain upon his shoulder, the loosened golden hair, which had strayed across his breast; the little ice-cold hands, which had lain so passive in his, haunted him, and what haunted him even more was a look in the beautiful eyes when they opened, and rested upon his face.

A look which had made his heart throb and his pulses thrill, but which had faded out as she raised herself slowly from his arms, and glancing round the room had remembered where he was.

"She thought she was in Graeme's arms," the young man thought jealously, as he recalled that look, in the solitude of his great stately library. "And I would give my life to see such a look in her eyes for me! My life! That would not be very much to give; it seems rather worthless just now."

The early November dusk was creeping up over the stately beech trees, in the park and woods; a chill wind was stirring among the few sere and yellow leaves, which were all that the autumnal winds had left upon the trees.

In the library at Dereham the curtains were as yet undrawn, but a great blazing log fire burned under the carved mantel. The earl was sitting in a great leathern armchair by the hearth, his head was lying back in a tired attitude, even in the uncertain, fitful firelight his face looked worn and haggard; he wore a loose velvet coat, and there was an unusual carelessness in his dress, and an unusual languor in his attitude, the housekeeper thought, as she came into the library, with rather a troubled look on her face.

The young man turned languidly, and with unfailing courtesy—she was his servant, perhaps, but she was a woman, and in Lord Dereham's creed, an old-fashioned one, alas, that entitled her to all courtesy—rose to his feet.

"What is it, Mrs. West?" he said, with a languid smile. "It is not often you be-ring me in my den. What can I do for you?"

"I apologise for troubling your lordship," Mrs. West said with a fair, old-fashioned curtsey which harmonised with her plain gown and quaint mob cap, "but Miss Maud Kinsley is here and wishes to see your lordship."

"Miss Maud Kinsley!" the earl repeated, turning white as a sheet as he uttered the name. "Here! at the Castle?"

"Yes my lord. The young lady seems in great trouble," Mrs. West added gently. "May I say that your lordship will see her?"

"Of course." The young man was fast recovering from his agitation, and looked eager and excited. "Where is she?"

"Miss Kinsley came to my room, my lord. I took her into the little drawing-room, but—" she paused, hesitating a little.

"But what?"

"There is no fire there, my lord, and if your lordship did not object——"

"I will go to her and ask her to come here," the earl said quickly. "Send lights here, Mrs. West."

He hurried out of the room, and across the hall; it was but dimly lighted, and the statues and busts gleamed strangely white in the dusk, while out of a door standing ajar a stream of light issued and fell on the marble pavement of the hall. The earl pushed it open unhesitatingly, he had forgotten his careless dress, his velvet coat and the silk handkerchief loosely knotted about his throat, the embroidered Turkish slippers into which his feet were thrust; he thought only that she had come to him, and that his eyes would rest upon the face for the sight of which he had thirsted for six long weary days, which he had longed yet dreaded to see.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE little drawing room was in a blaze of light; candles had been lighted hastily in the Dresden candelabra on the mantel-piece and in the Dresden sconces against the walls, the room was all white and gold, and in this brightness and pure whiteness and brilliance, the only shadow seemed to be Maud herself.

She was standing in the centre of the room in the full light of the many candles, a tall slender figure with dark, sad, wistful eyes. She wore her riding-habit and hat, and the close-fitting bodice of invisible green moulded the contour of her perfect figure, showing its beauty and graceful lines to the best advantage; she was very pale, and he could see that she trembled as he advanced towards her.

"Will you come into the library?" Lord Dereham said in an easy, unembarrassed manner calculated to put her at her ease. "There is no fire here, and you must be cold after your ride."

In silence she followed him across the hall into the dimly lighted library; there had not been time to bring the lights he had ordered.

"You will pardon all this confusion," he said with a smile, glancing at the litter of books and papers on the writing-table. "I have told them to bring lights and——"

"Please do not," she said faintly. "There is light enough here. I want to speak to you, Lord Dereham. Forgive me for troubling you, but——"

"Have you yet to learn that anything which brings you to the Castle must be a pleasant thing for me?" he queried gently, as he pulled up a wide armchair to the hearth and made her sit down. "How cold you are, my child," he added anxiously. "Even through your glove the cold of your hand can be felt. Why did you not send for me, Maud? You knew I would gladly come, and it is not fit weather for you to be out."

As he spoke he was gently pulling off the riding gloves from the little benumbed fingers and chafing them tenderly in his warm, strong palms.

Maud did not attempt any remonstrance, she sat as a child might have done, and submitted passively; her great, sad eyes looked up at him with wistful, intense questioning.

"Have you been ill?" she said abruptly. "Are you in trouble, too, Lord Dereham?"

His face flushed slightly.

"No trouble can touch you or yours without affecting me," he said gently. "I hoped you knew that, Maud! There, the little fingers are thawed now. Is that better?"

"Much better," she said, trying to smile as she glanced round the room with all a woman's interest in the surroundings of the man she loves. "You are not angry with me for coming?"

"Angry!" he repeated in an agitated voice, yet smiling a little. "How could I be? It was very good of you, and ——"

A footman brought in lamps and placed them on the reading-tables, then drew the heavy curtains close, and shut out the darkness. He was too perfectly-trained a servant to show any surprise at Miss Kinsley's presence in the great armchair, or any consciousness that the proceeding was not a perfectly conventional one; he received his lordship's order for tea with an impassive countenance and a grave bow, and departed noiselessly, closing the heavy oaken door behind him.

A curious old Louis the Fourteenth clock, on a bracket in a recess, was ticking rather loudly in the silent room. Maud sat drooping in the great armchair, her little hands lying white against the dark cloth of her habit.

The faint color which her rapid ride through the cold air had brought to her face was fading slowly away, and the long dark lashes were resting on cheeks which were almost colorless. The earl, leaning his shoulder against the tall mantel-shelf, was looking at her with his dark, passionate eyes full of love and pain, reading the sorrow and trouble and shame on her fair face, and feeling that the shame hurt him even more than the sorrow.

He guessed that the girl was suffering keenly at the apparent boldness and unmaidenliness of her visit to him; he knew her sensitive pride too well not to be sure that it was only a strong reason that would bring her there alone.

For a moment he hesitated whether he should not ask her if he should send for Mrs. West, thinking she would like the support of a woman's presence; then he

recollected that his doing so might betray to her that he felt the proceeding was an unusual one, and he said nothing, but waited silently until she had in some measure recovered her composure.

"How is Gilbert?" he asked then, in a cheerful, matter-of-fact voice. "I heard this morning that he was better. I hope that is so."

"He is getting better," Maud answered hurriedly, her voice a little unsteady in spite of all her efforts. "I came—I came ——"

"You shall tell me presently," he said lightly. "See, here comes my tea! Will you do me the honor of pouring it out?"

The pretty, homely occupation was calculated to put her at her ease, and the curious Indian tea equipage and Benares tray were beautiful enough even to attract Maud's notice and admiration in her trouble.

The footman had drawn up a small table by the hearth. On the pretty tea-tray was a little porcelain basket full of Gloire de Dijon rose.

The girl's sweet, sorrowful eyes brightened as they rested on them; her hand was trembling a little as she took up the quaint teapot and began to pour out tea.

Lord Dereham began chatting unconcernedly as he took his tea from the little shaking hand: but Maud answered only in monosyllables, although she drank her tea thirstily; and then, seeing that the girl was really anxious to tell him or ask him something, the earl ceased his careless chit-chat and bent towards her.

"Now won't you tell me, Maud," he said gently; "what I can do for you?"

A long pause followed his question. Maud sat silent, pressing her little hands together in great distress, hardly daring to proffer the request which she had ridden over to make.

"I ought not to trouble you," she began very unsteadily; "I have no right. If I could have helped it, I should not, but ——"

"I am sorry for that," the young man said very gently; "because I am so glad to help you. As for the right, I think you have every right, the right of a long and tried friendship, and of my most earnest desire to serve you, if I can."

"Thank you," the girl said faintly, her lips quivering a little with pain and her eyes downcast on her lap, where the little restless hands were moving incessantly in her agitation and distress. "You are very good."

"Tell me how to be good to you, Maud," he said smiling, "and I will be so; never fear!"

She looked up eagerly.

"Will you?—will you? Ah, if I could only be sure you would; but I am—am afraid—"

The eagerness died out of her face, her head drooped forward on her breast.

"You are not afraid of me," he said gently. "You know that there are few things I would not do for you, Maud. To whom could you come better fitted to help you than to the friend to whom your father has been so kind ever since his boyhood, and who has known his daughter since she was a child?"

The words were gently and gracefully spoken; he was trying to make her forget that he had ever wished to make her something nearer and dearer to him than his own daughter.

Perhaps she might have forgotten it, but that she was forced to put such restraint upon herself not to betray her own passionate love for him.

"Will you do this for me?" she said hastily; "you can do it, I think, if you will! I want to go to Ilchester—will you take me there?"

"To Ilchester?" he repeated mechanically.

"Yes; to Ilchester."

The young man was silent in the surprise and pain of the moment.

She rose and put one little shaking hand upon his arm.

"I want to see him," she said passionately; "I want to see him! Everyone has deserted him since he went there. No one seems to care—not even Gilbert—whether he lives or dies! There is only me! Oh, he is so lonely! so friendless!"

She broke off; her voice failed her for a moment, her head sank on her breast. He looked down at her in silence.

"Lonely, friendless," he thought bitterly, "with her love?"

"No one cares," she continued after a pause; "no one but me! I dare not ask papa to take me, he would not, and I cannot go alone; at least, if I could they would not let me in, perhaps, and I must see him."

"Do you mean that I am to take you without your father's permission?" Lord Dereham said in a troubled voice. "You are not asking me to do that Maud?"

"That is what I am asking you," she said despairingly. "That is what I am asking you. Will you not do it for me? It is not much surely, only to take me there and let me see him. They will not refuse if you ask them, will they? You can get me in!"

"I cannot do it, Maud. It would not be right, dear. It would be a base betrayal of your father's trust in me, and—where are you going?"

She had taken her little unsteady hand from his arm, and turning from him had begun to walk slowly across the room to the door.

At his abrupt question she paused, and standing still, caught at the back of a chair for support.

"I am going away," she answered feebly. "Since you will not go, there is no necessity for me to trouble you any longer. I am going——"

Her voice broke in a sudden sob, he followed her down the room hardly less agitated than she was herself.

They looked at each other over the tall carved back of the chair on which Maud leaned, the girl's eyes full of a piteous, despairing entreaty and pathetic reproach, the man's full of love and sorrow.

"How can I do it, dear?" he asked her very gently. "I am your father's friend; how can I let you disobey him, and go against his wishes? If he were willing that you should go to Ilchester, he would take you——"

"I told you he was not willing," she interrupted him coldly. "Had he been, I should not have needed to seek the help which, after all your protestations, you refuse me!"

"How can I do otherwise?" he said sorrowfully. "Ilchester just is no fit place for you, Maud. Mr. Graeme himself"—his voice shook a little as he uttered the name of his successful rival—"would be the last to wish it, and——"

"Because he is generous, am I to be a selfish coward?" she said with sudden passion. "Ah, you do not know—but I will not ask you to do violence to your feelings. I—I will find some other means of seeing him. Everyone cannot be as pitiless as you are."

She took her trembling hand off the back of the chair and turned again to the door; she felt strangely cold, as if her limbs were slowly turning to ice.

It had cost her so much to bend her pride to come to him as a suppliant, and she would not have done so if there had been any other means open to her; the room was growing dark as she made her slow way towards the door.

"Maud!" he exclaimed passionately. "Do not leave me in anger, do not go like this."

His voice, husky and passionate though it was, sounded strangely distant in her ears; the long sleepless nights, the intense agitation and suppressed misery had told upon her frame.

She had always been of too sensitive a temperament to be really robust; as she made her way to the door she put out her hands to feel the way, gropingly, like one suddenly stricken blind.

"Where is the door?" he heard her say faintly. "I cannot find the door."

In a moment he was by her side; she was white as death, and her eyes had no sight in them as they rested on his face; he put his arm around her, and she fell back heavily against his shoulder.

With a suppressed exclamation of pain he drew her close to him, and held her to his throbbing heart; her own beat so feebly that for one wild moment of anguish he thought that it did not beat at all. She rested heavy and inert, like a dead woman, in his arms.

"Maud," he whispered wildly, "Maud, I will go! My darling, speak to me."

But the white lips were silent, the golden head was heavy on his shoulder, she was quite unconscious of his fear or of his love.

Lifting her in his strong arms, he carried her to a couch and laid her gently down; his hunting flask was on the table, he snatched it up eagerly; it was half full of sherry.

With an exclamation of relief he poured some of the contents into the little silver cup, and lifting her head forced a small quantity through her lips; it acted like magic; a heavy sigh broke from her, and her great dark eyes opened.

His arms were still around her, his head bent low over hers. Would her eyes meet his, he wondered, with that calm look in them, the look that had thrilled him to his utmost soul? Yes; it was there again.

"Maud," he whispered; "Maud, my darling!"

But at the words it faded. She raised her head feebly, and tried to release herself from his arms; they dropped from her at once.

"You were ill," he muttered hastily in excuse, "and I did not like to summon assistance?"

"It is nothing," she faltered. "I am sorry I—— Will you tell them to bring Queenie round? I must go home now."

She had risen to her feet, supporting herself by the sofa. She looked so frail, so fragile in her dark dress; her great dark eyes were burning with a sombre light in her small white face.

"You cannot go yet," he said gently. "You are not able. Besides, you cannot go alone, Maud—I—you——"

He had scarcely yet mastered his emotion; his hands were trembling, his voice was shaken, his eyes were full of passion as they rested on her face.

She knew her own weakness too well to resist, and sank down on the sofa again, leaning her head on her hands.

Lord Dereham turned away from her with a gesture of intolerable pain, and began pacing up and down the room with hurried, uneven steps.

He was angry, and pained, and ashamed at his own weakness; he felt that, greatly as he loved her, he ought to have remembered how strong another's claim was, and have forced back those passionate words which had risen uncontrollably to his lips.

He ought to have recollected how lonely she was, how completely at his mercy; she had trusted him and he had betrayed her trust.

The clock on its gilded bracket ticked on, the young man continued his restless pacing up and down the room; Maud sat still and motionless.

She had uncovered her face, her head had fallen back, and her delicate features were outlined against the sombre velvet of the cushions, against which her hair glinted bright as gold.

The firelight blazing up fell full upon her white throat, and the little gold brooch with which her linen collar was fastened.

Lord Dereham looked over at her with grieved, longing eyes; she looked so frail, poor pretty child, for all the suffering she had to endure.

He paused abruptly by the sofa; she did not look or turn towards him, she felt weak and languid, unequal to any effort.

"Maud," he said entreatingly, "can you ever forgive me? I was mad for the moment that is my only excuse."

She put her little hand out in silence, it was easy for her to forgive such madness as his, she thought, with a bitter self-reproach at her disloyalty to the man who was suffering for her sake.

"You forgive?" he said eagerly; "you are more generous than I deserve. Maud, be more generous still, and trust me to take you to Ilchester."

She raised her head quickly; she turned to him, her sweet, pale face all aglow.

"You will go with me?" she said.

"Yes, if you will let me."

She looked at him in silence for a moment.

"Ah, how good of you," she said passionately; "and how selfish I am to make you suffer so. But, Ivor"—in her excitement she was unconscious that she was calling him by his Christian name, and the soft voice, as it uttered it, thrilled him—"I cannot help it! My father will not take me, I know. I have no friend whom I can trust as I would trust you—and he told me that I might trust you."

"He?—your father?"

"No, no!" she answered; "Arnold Graeme!"

Lord Dereham winced a little; the girl went on, unconscious of the pain she was inflicting upon her hearer.

"All these days I have been wishing to see him. I have had no word of him since he went; I know nothing, and the anxiety is so hard to bear—it seems to take all my strength away. But if you will take me to Ilchester, I will promise not to faint. I don't know what has come to me to make me so ridiculously weak; but I will give you no trouble."

"I will take you, dear," he said gently. "When will you go?"

"Can you take me to-morrow?" she queried eagerly. "To-morrow papa will be away at Welford; the dear old squire is to be buried, you know, and papa is to be present at the reading of the will and will not be back till late. Yes, I know it is shameful," she broke out wildly, reading his distaste in his dark eyes. "But I cannot help it; it is all base and mean and contemptible, and you are right to despise me, but I see no other way, and my heart seems breaking."

"I despise you?" he repeated. "Does a man despise what is dearer to him than his very life? Heaven knows there is no feeling in my heart save pity for you, Maud, and envy of him."

Envy of him! For a moment Maud hardly understood the meaning of his words, then, as she did so, the color rushed for a moment into her face.

"You do not know," she said faintly. "You cannot understand; some day, perhaps——"

She rose slowly from the sofa, she was trembling still.

"You will go with me?" she said unsteadily. "Can you go to-morrow?"

"Yes," he answered quickly, and perhaps even in her agitation, Maud guessed what it cost him to utter that little monosyllable, for her eyes sank before his glance.

She tried to thank him, but the words would not come; her pale lips quivered, but no sound came from them.

She turned abruptly away and moved again towards the door.

"Are you able to go yet?" he said gently. "Will you not rest a little while?"

"I think I must go," she replied tremulously, "it is getting late; Gwen will be anxious, I am afraid."

"You will allow me to ride back with you? I cannot be happy about you if I let you go alone."

"If you will come," she replied after a pause and speaking with an effort, "I shall be very glad."

"Will you rest here then?" he said. "I will not detain you long."

Maud went back to the sofa and resumed her old place as he hurried from the library; the fire blazed up brightly, the clock ticked on, the roses in the little basket gave out a sweet fragrance.

Maud put out her little, shaking hand, and, taking one from the cluster, touched it suddenly with her lips, then thrust it into her habit.

As she did so, she glanced around with a swift, shy glance, and crimsoned to the roots of her hair. The flush died away again almost immediately: a little, hysterical laugh broke from her lips; but the tears rose thickly to her eyes.

When they cleared away, she looked round the room with suppressed eagerness, not admiring either the furniture, or the bronzes, or the many evidences of wealth and artistic taste which abounded there but looking eagerly at Lord Dereham's writing table; at his cigar case thrown carelessly upon it.

The book he had been reading, or pretending to read; the picture of his mother over the mantel-piece, the beautiful foreign woman whom the late earl had brought to reign over his stately Castle, but who had enjoyed its beauties and luxuries for so short a time.

Maud knew that the young man spent much of his time here, and as she looked round with longing eyes, she thought that some day he would bring home a wife of his own there, and that they would spend many happy hours together in the beautiful, stately room.

And as she thought this, there rose up before her the passionate, dark eyes which had looked into hers, and his voice whispered again, in tones of softest tenderness—

"Maud, my darling!"

At the thought her face changed and softened, a sudden, tender love-light shone in the beautiful eyes.

She lifted her little hands to her face, and pressed them to her cheeks, which had grown hot and flushed; then she dropped them suddenly and turned pale and cold as the door opened and Lord Dereham entered.

"The horses are waiting," he said gently. "Are you ready? Are you sure you are well enough to ride, or shall I order a carriage for you?"

"I am quite well enough," she said quietly, and they went out together.

The hall was brightly lighted now, and the statues no longer gleamed ghostlike from their pedestals; but that only made the night without seem more dark and chill.

Maud could not repress a shiver as the earl lifted her on her saddle; it was so quiet and dark under the great trees, save where the lights streamed from the Castle windows.

A new moon hung low in the sky; there were no stars visible as they rode slowly and in silence down the great avenue.

There was a public walk at Ilchester, bordered on either side with tall poplar trees, which in the summer time, when the evenings were balmy, was a favorite resort of the townspeople.

At intervals, under the trees, seats were placed, and in the months of July and August it would be difficult to find one unoccupied, while the avenue itself would be crowded with people chatting, laughing, and greeting their friends.

Ilchester was rather a dull city, but this mild dissipation was not tabooed, and it had even been suggested by some enterprising spirit that a kiosk might one day be erected to accommodate a band.

But on a gloomy November day the pretty Poplar Walk, as it was called, was always deserted.

It was certainly not a desirable promenade when the wind was cold, and the tall poplars stood gaunt and leafless on either side of the avenues, and no one came there save those whose business or pleasure took them to the frowning old castle which commanded the great old walls beneath which the walk had been planted; and these were few.

The castle was in good preservation; the gloomy facade was dark and time-stained, and one of the towers had been restored, but over its gray walls the ivy grew in its rich green luxuriance; and in its great yard a portion of ground had been planted carefully and tastefully as a flower garden, where the governor's little children played with the shadow of the old walls falling on—yet not darkening—the gold of their sunny curls.

There were no gay idlers lounging under the poplar trees on the chill November day when Lord Dereham and Maud Kinsley walked quickly up the avenue leading to the great, frowning gates of the old castle.

The seats were all unoccupied, and they met no one after they left the town. It was a cold day, but there was a gleam of sunshine peering through the clouds, and falling on the stately spire of the cathedral which was in the centre of the town, and another pale gleam which touched the ivy clustering over the towers of the old castle.

The earl was glad of that sunshine. Pale and cold as it was, it prevented the castle looking so dreary, he thought, to the sweet, sad eyes of the girl who walked with him, pale and grave in her dark, sad furs.

They had come from Berkeley by train. The earl had suggested driving, but Maud shrank from giving his servants cause for comment, and she thought, too, that the earl's carriage and liveries would attract more attention at Ilchester than was at all desirable.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE SCIENCE OF CURVING A BALL.—The theory is as simple in its rules as it is easy of demonstration practically. It is as follows: The ball, in its horizontal flight through the air from the hand of the thrower—technically known as the pitcher—is retarded in its forward motion by the resistance of the air, which not only exerts a pressure on the face of the ball, but also a resisting force on the side by friction. Now, if the ball is simply thrown forward without any special bias being given it, the friction of the air is equal on each side of it; but if it be made to rotate on its own axis, from right to left, or from left to right, the conditions are materially changed, in as much as in the latter case one side of the ball's surface is made to revolve in the air with twice the rapidity of the other side, and to the extent of this increased lateral friction is the ball retarded in its progress on the side on which the increased friction bears. The result of this changed relation is naturally a curve in the line of its delivery in the direction of the side on which its progress has been retarded. This is, the simple philosophy of modern base-ball pitching. The application of the theory in practice is to give the necessary thin or rotary motion to the right or left, in order to produce the "in curve" or the "out curve."

AT SUNSET.

BY WM. W. LONG.

We stood together, you and I, upon the old fort's crest,
When one sweet June, the day's work all was done—
The river's blue waves kissed the rocks below,
Or gleamed like gold where flashed the setting sun.

Its wavelets sang in water music soft and low,
And fondled the grassy old-time storied isle,
As the red sun, clothed in Nature's royal robes,
Upon its green breast gave a lover's smile.

Afar the west, in purple, brown and gold,
To a still deeper, darker color grew;
Then faded as the dusky night came down—
Above us stars peeped from the ether blue.

A stillness bent o'er river, vale and wood,
The night was close around us, me and you;
And the fair city far below our feet,
Had vanished in the darkness from our view.

Oh! glorious sunset—waves of blue—sweet friend,
That in the stillness lay upon my breast;
A picture only now in Memory's hall—
Red lips no more to mine are warmly pressed

FORTUNE'S HAND.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "STRANGERS STILL," "PRINCE AND PEASANT," "THE LIGHTS OF ROCKBY," "A WOMAN'S SIN," ETC.

CHAPTER XXII.—[CONTINUED.]

DON'T you think, Lord Glynne, you have gone far enough?" Dallas says slowly; and his lordship fancies, from the look in his cousin's eyes, that he has gone far enough; but he knows—though he is afraid—that he must not go farther.

"I have spoken without reason—without strong reason," he resumes, rather blusterlingly. "Mrs. Murray and her daughter have no resource but to leave the house at once. Lady Maria is indignant beyond measure about it, and naturally feels very strongly on Joyce's behalf; she feels also that, but for her being unhappily an invalid, this might never have happened. In her proper place as hostess she could have protected poor Joyce."

"Don't you think," Dallas repeats coming a step nearer, his eyes gleaming with anger, "that you have said enough? Not that I should dream of resenting your malice and hatred," he adds, with galling contempt; "you can't help your nature. But I won't listen to your championing Joyce against me; it is as needless as it is impertinent. Joyce Murray knows her good name is as dear to me as my life or honor. Joyce knows me and trusts me!" he finishes excitedly.

"Why don't you say at once she loves you madly and means to be faithful to you forever?" Viscount Glynne asks, with a venomous sneer. "I shouldn't be surprised at any assertion of the kind from you."

"Wouldn't you prefer proof?" Dallas asks mockingly, suffering himself to be betrayed into an indiscretion in his raging contempt.

The Viscount's pallid face grows very livid.

"Not even your wretched vanity could trump up a proof!" he says huskily.

"Couldn't it?" Dallas rejoins, smiling; and the smile is like the red flag of the torero to the infuriated bull.

"I don't wonder at your wife leaving you!" the Viscount says furiously.

"Nonsense!" Dallas responds airily. "My wife hasn't left me. You've been swallowing slander wholesale, I'm afraid, Viscount. My wife loves me, and—I love her," he adds, a little unsteadily, "and I am going up to town to rejoin her this afternoon, unless the Earl wishes me to stay."

"The Earl has expressed no wish about you, sir!" Lord Glynne retorts, his sunken eyes flaming still. "If he were able to express a wish, I have no doubt it would coincide with mine."

"Thank you—for your courtesy and hospitality both," Dallas responds, smiling coldly. "I shall never forget either."

And he quits the room, and half an hour later quits Pentreath, never to enter it again.

When Dallas departs, Lord Glynne locks his door carefully against intruders, and from behind the screen which is leaning untidily against the wall and masking the second small door peep out the dark glossy curled head and sparkling eyes of Mademoiselle Bella Glover.

"Well," she says, laughing softly, "you said listeners would hear no good of themselves. That meant I should hear ill; but you see he never said one word against me, never suspecting I had the tip of my finger in the pie, poor young man!"

"I don't know what good you have done for yourself or anybody by putting your finger in the pie," the Viscount says gruffly. "You're too clever by half, Bella!"

"Oh, no, I'm not!" she retorts coolly. "I have to be very clever—poor little I!—in order to carry out my employer's wishes. You wanted to get rid of Dallas Glynne, didn't you? Well, you have got rid of him. Do be a little bit grateful to me sometimes!"

"Yes, I have got rid of him, I hope," he admits savagely. "Confound him and his impudence!"

"If you'd like to use a stronger expression than that to relieve your feelings, I won't object," says mademoiselle politely. "That remark of his anent that quite too universally charming young lady seems to have riled you considerably, my lord. Do you want the proof hinted at? If so, and it's to be had, and not a figment of his imagination, I'll get it for you."

"I wish you would," the Viscount says sullenly. "It is too bad for a fellow like to be able to slander an innocent girl with impunity."

"Oh," Miss Glover rejoins, her lip curling, "I don't think it was exactly slander, do you know! But I'll find out for you, never fear! There's plenty to discover, I have no doubt."

And Viscount Glynne, turning over some papers, makes no reply to this friendly assurance beyond a savagely-muttered imprecation.

"Haven't you anything better than that to say to me," Miss Bella murmurs plaintively, "your poor little friend who is devoted to your interests?"

"I don't know why the deuce you wanted me to invite that fellow here," grows the Viscount. "I did it to please you. I hate the sight of him!"

"Never mind—I had my reasons—good reasons," his little friend says soothingly. "And I promised you I would soon get rid of him for good and all, out of your way, and I have kept my promise, you see."

The scheming woman speaks but the truth.

Dallas Glynne has left Pentreath, never to re-enter it during its master's illness; for two days later Lyulph Glynne is Earl of Pentreath, and, when the old Earl's will is no allusion to the sum of five hundred pounds which has been paid yearly from the estate both to the Honorable Percival Glynne and afterwards to his son Dallas.

Dallas Glynne has therefore now no surety as to its future payment.

He can only trust to the generosity of his cousin the new Earl, who never offers him, or ever intended to offer him, one shilling from all his newly-acquired wealth.

CHAPTER XXIII.

I DECLARE solemnly," poor old Miss Dormer says, with feverish earnestness, thrusting her gray hands of hair off her temples and pushing her cap awry, "one would actually think that the floors of this house were washed with milk and the walls painted with eggs and butter, to see the weekly bills that come in! Here is a bill of one pound eight and sevenpence-three-farthings from the dairyman for one week, and no company or anything extra—only dear Lolie at home. The expenses of this house are something really awful!" the poor old lady declares, with tragic emphasis. "I can't enjoy the blessed Sabbath services, nor sleep in my bed on Sunday nights, thinking of that tyrannical-looking cook marching up to me at eleven next morning with her pile of little red books!"

"Let me settle with the cook, aunt," Yolande says quietly, "and look after the housekeeping for you. It is wearing you out."

"You may well say that," Miss Dormer responds irritably; "but there's no use in your offering to do it, child. I must get some one as a housekeeper, I suppose, and increase the immense expenses still more!"

"Why, aunt?" Yolande inquires, with a faint smile. "I am not going to ask any salary from you. And it is absurd," she adds, "to have another servant in the house when there are seven already, including Pitts. I'll be housekeeper, aunt. It will be nice employment for me."

"My dear, there is no use in talking in that way," Miss Dormer says, looking scandalized. "You know your husband would not like it or allow it. Just fancy," the innocent lady goes on, with a futile attempt at a woman-of-the-world voice, "if your mother-in-law, Lady Nora, or your cousins by marriage, the Earl and Countess of Pentreath, were to call on you and find you downstairs worrying with the cook!"

This grand speech is all uttered for the benefit of Mrs. Sarjent, who has come in to pay a somewhat early visit at the primitive hour of eleven o'clock; and Mrs. Sarjent resents the speech accordingly.

"No, that would never do, Yolande," she says. "Since you've married among such grand people, you'll have to live according. 'Cut your coat according to your cloth,' as the sayin' is! Well, when did you see your mother-in-law—Lady Flora, or Dora, or whatever her name is?"

"Not since my wedding, aunt Sarjent," Yolande answers composedly.

Mrs. Sarjent sees the color rising in her face, and scents some secret which Yolande is endeavoring to conceal, and which therefore it behoves her to ferret out immediately.

"Never been to see you since the Earl's death!" she exclaims.

"Lady Nora is not in England, aunt Sarjent," Yolande replies, the color deepening a little. "Besides," she adds, smiling carelessly, "I didn't marry Lady Nora when I married Captain Glynne. She isn't bound to love, honor, and obey me!"

Aunt Keren laughs at the mild little joke.

Mrs. Sarjent, who fancies that Yolande is trying to avoid giving her any information, throws herself back in her chair, crosses her arms, puts one knee over the other, and turns her eyes on young Mrs. Glynne.

"She seemed a very stiff, cold-mannered, affected woman that morning at your wedding-breakfast," she observes decisively; "and what a present she gave you—a bit of a silver egg-basket! It never cost a penny more than five pounds!"

"But I think five pounds was quite enough for Lady Nora to give for a present, aunt Sarjent," Yolande says coldly. "She is not at all well off, you know, though she is an earl's daughter and the widow of an earl's son."

"Goodness me!" Mrs. Sarjent exclaims, her face getting redder than usual in an outbreak of Radical emotion. "I hope you haven't many more of these grand beggarly aristocrats without a penny in their pockets in the family you've got into, Yolande, child! They'll all hang on to you and sponge on you frightfully, if you don't take care!"

She laughs fondly as she utters this pleasant prophecy.

Yolande looks at her in grave displeasure the color rising from chin to brow.

"I should never dream of considering that my husband's mother was asking too much from me if she came and lived with me whenever she liked," Yolande says, with a subdued passionateness of manner; "she should have the best welcome I could give her, for his sake."

"Oh, my!" Mrs. Sarjent exclaims resentfully, with a sarcastic laugh. "You'd better tell Lady Nora that—she'll take you at your word, never fear! You're just the daughter-in-law that will suit her, I should think."

"I hope so," Yolande rejoins briefly; and Mrs. Sarjent abandons the topic in despair of rousing Yolande into a proper spirit towards her aristocratic connections.

She turns to Miss Dormer however, and harasses the poor old lady into an actual fit of temper by her assertions and declarations and her ridicule of poor aunt Keren's nervous dread of her servants.

"You pay 'em high wages, and you feed 'em on the fat of the land, and then you say you're afrid to make 'em do their business," she says scornfully. "You should take a leaf out o' my book, aunt Keren. My servants are as meek as mine, and my cook knows that her bills are to be so much and no more; and, if there's a shilling one week more than another in my dairyman's bill, I know the reason why."

"Well, I can't do that with mine," aunt Keren says crossly. "My cook gave me notice because I spoke of the immense quantity of parsley she had from the greengrocer's, and asked her what on earth she used it for, as I never saw a bit on the table!"

"And you didn't take her notice, of course?" Mrs. Sarjent questions, with a smile of superiority.

"No—oh, no!" poor aunt Keren replies, red and trembling at the bare remembrance. "She is a very bad-tempered woman, and I only said, 'I don't want to displease you, cook; I only asked a question;' and so she said she'd stay."

"And what you should have done, and what I'd have done, aunt Keren," Mrs. Sarjent says, in the tone of an amiable instructress of the ignorant, "was to pay her a month's wages and turn her out of the house there and then! Your other servants would have seen you weren't afraid of them and they'd have been tame enough for a while, I'll engage. Let your servants see you're not afraid of them, and they'll soon learn to be afraid of you. And do you mind what I'm saying, Yolande," she adds sharply, making it a point to be very unceremonious with Mrs. Dallas Glynne, lest she should get stuck up on account of her aristocratic marriage. "You'll find the wisdom of my words, no matter how grand an establishment you're goin' to keep up!"

"I am not going to keep up any grand establishment, aunt Sarjent," Yolande says steadily. "Aunt Keren thinks that I—that we might as well stay here, unless Captain Glynne wishes me to go abroad with him."

This statement sounds simple and credible enough.

It is not spoken without some curious hesitancy and some still more curious blushes.

And, as Mrs. Sarjent cannot possibly understand what even such a girlish wife as Yolande can find to blush and falter about in speaking of her husband and a possible new home, she grows quite indignant at what she calls "humbug and nonsense."

"Well, but I suppose you know which you are going to do, don't you?" she asks sharply. "Bless my soul! You sentimental girls think that matrimony is to be all spooning and mooning and soft speeches and romantic rubbish! You'll find out your mistake, my dear," Mrs. Sarjent predicts. "You'll find it's house-rent and bills and tables and worry and bother and anxiety, or if you want any extra pin-money, and staying out at night until two in the morning, and coming home smelling of cigars and brandy, and talking thick—though I'm happy to say Sarjent never did that but twice in his life, from the day he was married to the day he died," interpolates Mrs. Sarjent. "He knew I wouldn't stand those games. Oh, you've got it all to learn, my dear!"

"No, I think not," Yolande says idly, with a red spot flaming on each cheek. "Thanks to you, aunt Sarjent, I have learned it already."

"Oh, that's nothing," Mrs. Sarjent rejoins with a loud laugh. "It's a hundred times worse than that, Yolande, though of course you wouldn't believe a word against your darling What's-his-name now. Wait till you're married a year and a day, my dear, and you will. By-the-by, where is your husband, Yolande?"

"He is staying with some friends—at least, he has gone to stay a few days with a brother-officer at Pentreath," Yolande replies, flushing again.

It is a fact that at present she does not know where Captain Glynne really is.

She had one brief letter—curt and cold—to tell her he had left Pentreath, and giving her Colonel Majilton's address, near Portsmouth, if she wished to write to him, as he would probably stay there for a day or two.

That was nine days since; and whether he has returned to Pentreath for the old Earl's funeral, or has stayed on with his friend Colonel Majilton, or gone elsewhere, Yolande is utterly uncertain.

"Well," Mrs. Sarjent exclaims, with unpleasant emphasis, rising to take her departure, "that wasn't the way of the world when I was married. Of course we weren't titled people or aristocratic people, still we did think a young couple just married shouldn't go visiting about without each other. Times are changed now, I suppose. Well, I must run off. I see your Pacific Salvage shares are going down, aunt Keren. I suppose you know?"

"No; I don't understand the ups and downs of shares and things of that kind," Miss Dormer answers. "I leave that to clever people like you."

Mrs. Sarjent modestly accepts what is but her just due.

"I wish to goodness," she remarks, with a sniff of self-satisfaction, "that uncle Silas had been clever enough not to meddle with Viscount Glynne, or Lord Glynne, or whatever he is, or his Pacific Salvage Company either. He'll lose plenty of money over it, or my name's not Wilmot Sarjent. Well, good-bye, aunt Keren. You be stiff and determined with servants, my dear, and you'll be able to manage them then. Good-bye, Yolande. You write for that naughty stay-away husband of yours at once—mind, I tell you, my dear!"—and Mrs. Sarjent emphasises her warning with a kiss which Yolande shrinks from; then then the good lady goes away, leaving behind her a sensation of being stung with nettles or scratched with briars.

"I wish some one not a thousand miles off would stay away!" Yolande mutters, with her hands clenched in a passionate gesture.

"I wish Wilmot Sarjent would not talk to me about the way to manage servants," Miss Keren says testily; "I managed servants before she was born. I don't think," the old lady adds, in the intensity of her displeasure, "that she has a nice mind!"

There is silence for a little while, and then Yolande says, in a hurried unsteady voice—

"I wish, aunt, you would let me do as I said—be the housekeeper. I should like it very much. It will—will keep my mind employed."

"What's the good of your taking it up only to drop it again?" responds Miss Dormer, still irritated. "As soon as Captain Glynne, your husband, came here, you'd have to give it up. He would not like it."

"I want to learn to be useful, aunt," Yolande urges, turning away her head slowly.

"Well, there's no harm in that," the old lady admits. "When is he coming back to you, my dear?"

"I don't quite know," Yolande replies, in a low tone. "I hope—soon."

"I hope so too," Miss Dormer says drily, and a little resentfully. "I think, as Wilmot Sarjent said, young couples newly-married oughtn't to let anything separate them, except through duty or necessity."

Yolande feels the blood rushing hotly through her veins with angry pride at hearing Dallas blamed.

"He will be here soon," she says suddenly. "I daresay"—with lips that smile tremulously—"he will be here—this is Tuesday—well, on Friday or Saturday, aunt Keren, at the very latest. I am going to write to him this afternoon."

This means that she is going to rush upstairs to her own room, to lock the door against all interruptions, to get out her prettiest writing-paper from the new box which came home only last night, with its dainty mourning border and gray and silver monogram, and then pour out the pleading and tenderness, the truth and humility of her love straight from her heart in appeal to her husband's heart.

"I am a wicked girl not to have done it before," she tells herself, fitting in a fresh nib and getting fresh ink so that her letter may be in all ways pleasing to his eyes who will read it; "but I was sure—so sure that he would come or send to me long before this."

Tears of joy and pain together come in her eyes and fall, blurring out "My dear Dallas," which she has written.

So Yolande takes another sheet, and makes such a hopeless muddle of spelling "anxiously" that she has to throw that aside.

But she perseveres, though her hands are trembling, her cheeks burning with excitement, and the hot tears welling up every few minutes.

Then the first letter is by far too incoherent, the second too tender, and Dallas may not like it—she has called him "My darling" twice—the third too cold, and not explicit enough.

But after an hour's hard work Yolande's letter of love to her absentee bridegroom is written—not at all to her satisfaction, but as well as she can write it if she were to try for hours. It is as follows—

My dear Dallas—I have been anxiously expecting to hear from you every day. Did you go back to Pentreath for the Earl's funeral? Was it very grand? When are you coming back to town? Dearest, will you forgive me all the past, and, because I love you so much, will you—will you—oh, my darling!—love me a little and be kind

to me, and I will be—what you asked me to be—your own most faithful, submissive, and loving wife,

"YOLANDE GLYNNE."

Then it is addressed successfully after four envelopes have been spoiled, and Yolande goes out herself and posts it, and wishes, the moment it has fallen into the box, that she had it back again, to say more in it and to say it better.

And then she begins to count the hours and days.

She wonders where Dallas will be when he gets it—whether a frown will come on his face at the sight of her writing, thinking that it may be an angry, jealous, or reproachful missive.

Perhaps, when he reads it through, he will smile and be pleased.

There is nothing in it to displease him, except—oh, awful thought!—the recollection of her existence and the legal bonds that hold him to her, far away from his heart's desire!

And then she tries to comfort herself, remembering that he certainly wished, and said he wished, for her wifely affection and obedience.

Surely he cannot be angry with her for meekly laying both at his feet!

He will come without writing, most likely—just send a telegram a few hours ahead.

She may look out for that about six hours after she knows the post has reached Portsmouth.

But no telegram, no letter comes. Then she tells herself he has of course gone back to Pentreath—and to Joyce Murray, alas!—and her letter will be forwarded to him.

Thursday, Friday, Saturday pass away; Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday follow; and, in desperation, Yolande writes to Colonel Majilton to know if Captain Glynne has gone back to Pentreath, as she is very anxious at not hearing from him "for several days past."

Ah, poor Yolande! She knows it is eighteen days since Dallas wrote her those few cold careless lines commencing "Dear Yolande," and ending "Yours sincerely, D. Glynne."

But neither to this letter to Colonel Majilton does she receive any reply.

Long afterwards Yolande learns that Colonel Majilton left England for Bermuda two days before her letter to him was written.

And the days and the weeks roll by, and Yolande lives through them as one lives through days which, when past, one looks back at with shuddering wonder at one's powers of endurance, and at last she knows that her husband has deserted her.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE month of May, with its nipping east winds and its chestnut-blossoms and its bright cold sunshine, has lapsed into June, sweet, placid, odorous June, with all its bright-colored blossoms and its perfumes and its balmy south winds, stirring the fresh green leaves and the flowering grasses.

The grand old crimson peonies, in gorgeous clumps beneath the sycamores, are all glowing and nodding their royal heads and sending forth their faint sweet honey-scents to the warm breeze.

And Yolande Glynne, wandering about under the sycamores and past the clumps of peonies, and the old-fashioned lilac-bushes and golden pendants of laburnum-blossom which hedge about the lawn and gardens at Fair View, feels on this fair June morning that her heart is gladsome for a brief space, smiles come to her face unforced; and even some words of an old half-forgotten song ripple over her lips.

"It's a hundred times nicer here than in London; don't you think so aunt Keren?" Yolande says brightly.

"Yes, my dear," aunt Keren replies dolefully.

"I hope you're are fretting and troubling about all that grand furniture in London, aunt," Yolande says soothingly. "I am sure you needn't. The Taylors will use it well, seeing how fresh and handsome it is."

"Use it well!" aunt Keren repeats irefully. "If the way they have treated the furniture here is a sample of good usage, I don't expect one of the carpets nor a bit of that splendid olive-satin furniture in the drawing-room will be worth looking at! They'll wear it out more in six months than we should do in six years, unless we steal" —with an accession of fire and bitterness at the retrospect—"a new housemaids like that last horrid creature who never put a tea-leaf on the floors when she swept them and told me not to bother with dusting-covers!"

"She was a very impertinent girl," Yolande says, trying to soothe her aunt, and wishing wearily that she would leave the troubles of her London house in her London house, seventy-five miles away, and not bring her anxieties about fine furniture and careless tenants and saucy housemaids into this June morning, with the scents of the lilacs and peonies floating subtly sweet, and the shadows falling across the warm sunlit paths.

Riches have wrought a pleasing effect in poor Miss Dormer's nature, as in many another's.

She has grown fussy, anxious, irritable with the weight of added cares.

Her grand house in Rutland Gardens, her grand furniture, her servants, are all portions of a long nightmare which presses upon her waking hours as well as upon her sleeping ones.

Between the nightmare and the east wind she has broken down in a sharp fit of illness—her second this year, from which she has scarcely recovered at the present time.

Her doctor ordered change of air, and so it came very opportunely that the tenants to whom Fair View was let furnished wanted to come to London, and delightedly exchanged the old-fashioned small country-house for the large new-fashioned and rather gorgeous town-house.

Poor Miss Kerenhappuch Dormer was thus restored to her familiar well-beloved household gods, desecrated though she grieves to find them by careless servants, uncleanly children, and an easy-tempered master and mistress.

She grieves quietly though deeply about Yolande's unhappy marriage, which is to her a distressing mystery that she is seldom able to forget—never indeed for hours after one of Mrs. Sarjent's visits, as that excellent lady is up in arms with zeal and indignation, curiosity and excitement on the subject of Captain Glynne's "abominable behavior."

"He's done something horrid—that's why she won't live with him," she remarks, with a nod of assurance. "She found it out during their honeymoon. I saw a change in her look and manner the very first moment I laid my eyes on her. He has run away with some woman," Mrs. Sarjent adds, in a sepulchral whisper, up in poor old Miss Dormer's bed-room, where she lies, ill and helpless, and fevered with the suggestions her visitor pours into her ears. "And she was in the right!" Mrs. Sarjent says determinedly, believing her own story thoroughly. "Shows a proper spirit in the girl not to put up with such conduct from any husband, no matter how high and mighty and well-born he was!"

Silas Dormer too frets about his niece and his niece's husband, immersed in business, in money-making and money-losing though he is, and, man-like, he relieves the discomfort of his mind by being very cross and low-spirited at home—it would not do to wear such a face in the city as he wears amongst the gooseberry-bushes at Fair View.

After one serious remonstrance with his niece, and a request that she will allow him to interfere and bring Captain Glynne back, which Yolande refuses with earnest tears, Mr. Dormer desists from further interference.

"My husband and I have agreed to part for a while, uncle. It was my wish. It is no fault of his that we are not living together," she says, and hopes she is saying only the truth. "We did not care much for each other after we were married, and we are better apart. He will come to see me soon, I daresay, and then you can talk to him, uncle, if you wish."

"I don't understand that sort o' talk," Mr. Dormer rejoins gruffly, his provincial accent coming out strongly. "When young folks are married, it's their duty, Yolande, to care for each other."

Back again in dear old Fair View, with its lack of anything like a view, and its peaceful walls and homely doors and flower-scented gardens, as in the old peaceful days, ere love and misery made themselves her acquaintances, Yolande does not feel sad, neglected, and lonely as in London.

Hope is wafted to her in the intangible odors of the soft south wind.

There are whispers of sweetness and happiness in the dancing leaves and nodding flowers, in the white narcissi swaying in the breeze, and the pyramids of lilac-bloom.

When earth is so beautiful, heaven cannot be far off.

Yolande has written again, not to Dallas, but to Lady Nora, telling her, in as gentle and delicate terms as she can employ, that Dallas and she are parted through a misunderstanding, "in which I own I was much to blame," writes poor Yolande humbly; "but the grief I have suffered since has been, I think, punishment enough for my fault, and Dallas knows how truly I love him."

She blushes at the sentence as it stands written.

It looks so much like a miserable confession of unreciprocated affection—it looks so much like what it really is, though it is written concerning the man who is her lawful husband, and written to his mother.

But on the writing and despatch of that letter Yolande has sown a grain of hope which has sprung up like the prophet's gourd-vine, blossoming fair and high above her head in the course of a single day and night.

It was only on the day before yesterday she wrote that letter; but it is quite possible, she thinks, that she may have a reply from Lady Nora this forenoon.

"And I feel somehow that I shall have an answer very soon," Yolande says to herself, with a dreamy smile, wandering away from aunt Keren in her tetchy mood among the lilacs and acacias that grow in clumps near the garden gate. "I feel sure that it is some news for me, as if something very good were going to happen to me."

Perhaps—oh, joyful "perhaps"!—Lady Nora has written to her son, enclosing his poor little wife's letter, and Dallas himself is at this moment speeding towards her as fast as steam can bring him.

She trembles, and the tears rise to her eyes with ecstasy at the thought.

Oh to see him now—now—this minute—crossing the bit of sward dotted with daisies between her and the house.

She stands there, trying to picture his coming and their meeting.

He may be cold and formal and resentful; but nothing shall chill her gladness or tenderness to him.

Let him leave her to make every advance, every confession, every atonement, she will make them all.

She will give him unstinted and absolute forgiveness for every wrong against her, she will lavish devotion on him, strive to serve him and please him, as if he were a god, if only he will not leave her desolate again!

Nothing very good happens however, though the morning hours slip on into noon.

Yolande, after listening to her aunt Keren's complaints, now of the hot sunshine, now of the dull breeze, now of the shadows of the leaves flickering over the page of her book, now of the glare of the noonday light, gravely entreats her to come indoors.

Once established in her own especial sanctum, a small bare-looking room, used as a work-room, housekeeper's room, and general-shop for household repairs of all descriptions, Miss Dormer's temper and spirits improve.

There is a lot of house-linen to be looked over; there is a tidy sewing-woman to set to work making new bed-ticks; and, when the old lady has eaten a morsel of luncheon—a spoonful of soup, a bit of boiled fowl—and drunk a glass of Burgundy, she feels as well and cheerful as ever.

It is so comfortable to be back amongst her cherished lares and penates, with her four quiet respectful servants and her chatty civil work-woman deferentially gossiping with her as she diligently works, that the grand house in Rutland Gardens and the grand dinner-parties and the haughty servants all seem like an evil dream from which she has awaked.

The music of the fluttering leaves, the humming bees, and the little birds twittering softly in the shadow are all shut out from the clean, dull, cosy work-room, it is true, and the perfumes of the blossoms are superceded by a fine factory odor from the great pile of glazed linen ticking and the fragrance of a large sewing-machine newly oiled.

By-and-by the music of the sewing-machine begins, and the seamstress's voice is raised in a high key to retail a choice bit of local news to Miss Dormer, who is placidly gathering the frills for a pillow-case.

Where are the golden hopes that were dancing on the sunbeams this morning? Gone with the evanescent gladness, the futile belief in swift posts, tender mediation, sweet forgiveness, ardent reconciliation. All gone! All miserable day-dreams, which have vanished like a mirage.

A faint hopeless pain seems dragging Yolande's heart down to the earth, a feverish impatience with every one and every thing in general, and the tedious job of marking linen in particular torments her to a degree of silent irritation that threatens to break out every moment.

"Finished the pillow-cases, dear?" aunt Keren asks smilingly. "Then here are the dozen of table-napkins and the kitchen-towels."

Yolande bites her lip and grinds her teeth to keep back the sharp words of unreasonable anger.

Miss Dormer knows quite well that Yolande is unhappy and restless. She can see that the girl's eyes are dull and weary, that the young face is haggard and pallid with pain.

Because it soothes her nerves to sit in a cosy rocking-chair, employed with light work, in this cool, clean, and altogether unlovely little room, she thinks it must soothe Yolande to sit in another cosy chair and write names on linen for the space of an hour or two.

"My head is very hot, aunt," Yolande says, with a smothered sigh and a quick frowning glance out of the window which commands a view of a brick wall six feet distant; "I think"—with another frown at the table-napkins and kitchen-towels—"I must take a turn in the garden."

"Very well, dear," Miss Dormer responds amiably, but with a slight touch of "Christian patience and resignation" in her tones. "Run away and enjoy yourself. I daresay I can do those towels and napkins by-and-by myself."

"Hush! Isn't that a sound of wheels?" Yolande exclaims, suddenly starting up. "Oh, do stop that horrid machine for one minute!"—with a convulsive gesture of wrath.

The woman stares with amazed eyes at Yolande's display of impatience.

"There, there! Never mind me, Mrs. Sale; go on—go on with your seam! What does it matter?"

Yolande flings herself down in her chair again, and snatches up her pen.

She was almost sure that she heard in a momentary pause of the harsh "whirr-r-r" the sounds of trampling hoofs and of gravel being crunched under wheels; but those sounds of hope were smothered the next moment; and now, when she has demanded silence, it is but to know she has deluded herself.

She begins to write "Dorm" with feverish haste, and then a great drop of the indelible ink falls as the parlor-maid appears.

"A lady to see you, ma'am. Mrs. Glynne the lady wants, ma'am"—to her mistress. "Here's her card, card, ma'am"—for Yolande, after a second upspringing of hope, is standing dumb and stupid.

"A lady? Oh, it's Lady Nora!"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

If we would see things aright, we must see them from the point of view of others as well as from our own. This is the God-like quality we ought to cultivate even if we can never perfect it; and this is the essence of justice.

Scientific and Useful.

CLEANING.—Plaster busts may be cleaned by dipping them into thick, liquid cold starch—that is, clear starch mixed with cold water—then drying them, and, when the starch is brushed off, the dirt comes off with it.

SMUGGLING.—An ingenious smuggling system has just been discovered in San Francisco. Opium, which the incoming Chinese steamers brought over was arranged in metallic cases, and as the steamer approached the coast, these were dropped overboard and immediately sank. After the lapse of a few hours the cases would rise to the surface, and could then be picked up by the small boats off the coast.

CHARCOAL.—Charcoal in a porous basket and also quicklime serve important uses in the purification of the air. In experimenting on this subject a scientist took three hens and placed them under bell glasses. With one he put a little lime, with another some charcoal, and with the third nothing. In a half hour the latter was dead, the second quite stupid, and the first was almost as well as ever. This shows the value of charcoal in a bed room or sick room.

BRUSHING AND COMBING.—A prevalent idea is that which asserts that frequent brushing and stimulating of the scalp with a hard brush is the proper treatment of the hair. Nothing is more contrary to scientific treatment and fact. All authorities on the treatment of the skin and hair agree in saying that the hard brush, as too commonly used, is destructive to the hair. The skin is irritated by hard brushing; the hairs are broken and bruised by such treatment; and the idea that scurf is removed by this practice is delusive, for scurf forms faster than before. The hairbrush therefore should be soft.

PAPER GLASS WINDOWS.—Although paper glass windows may seem to be a contradiction in terms, they are really an accomplished fact. A window-pane is made of white paper, manufactured from cotton or linen, and modified by chemical action. Afterwards the paper is dipped into a preparation of camphor and alcohol which makes it like parchment. From this point it can be moulded and cut into remarkably tough sheets entirely transparent, and it can be dyed with almost the whole of the aniline colors, the result being a transparent sheet showing more vivid hues than the best glass exhibits.

Farm and Garden.

POULTRY.—A cheap and convenient disinfectant for poultry houses may be prepared by mixing one bushel of finely sifted dirt and one pound of chloride of lime. If fine tobacco dust be added, it will assist in preventing lice. The dirt so prepared may be dusted over the floors or in any portion of the poultry house, and it will greatly assist in keeping off disease and vermin. The cost is but a trifle.

THE FIELDS.—Fields exposed to sweeping winds should not be left naked through the winter any more than can be avoided. Even growing grain is little protection, as may be seen by the black coating of the snow banks on its leeward side. This fine dust is the richest part of the soil everywhere. Some sandy soils are even worse for blowing away, as the winter winds dig gullies through them and pile up the sand as if it were snow.

CROWING.—The crowing of cocks early in the morning can thus be headed off says a magazine writer: A small lath is loosely suspended about eighteen inches above the bird's perch, so that when he stretches his neck up to crow the swinging lath comes into contact with his comb. This effectually stops him, according to the writer, who states that he owns a dozen birds which never presume to crow until he lets them out.

VERMIN—A teaspoonful of either crude or crystal carbolic acid, thoroughly stirred and then sprinkled upon swine from a sprinkling pot or whisk-broom, will destroy vermin as completely as grease, coal-oil or tobacco water, with none of their bad effects. Pure coal oil should never be used, as it often causes sores and peeling of the skin; mixed with lard, half-and-half, it is free from this objection. If the application of pure coal oil should make the skin sore, a thorough rubbing with lard of the parts affected will give relief if done soon.

MILK CONTAMINATION.—Those dairymen who do not believe in the power of milk rapidly to absorb and become contaminated by surrounding noxious smells will do well to try the following simple test, the results of which will, doubtless, immediately convince the most skeptical: Take a wide bowl or soup-plate to the cow-stable when you go to milk; pour into it a pint of fresh milk, set it on the floor or at the height of a milk stool, so as to expose it fully to the air of the stable, behind and close to the cows. If the day is close and heavy and the milk is cold and the stable not cleaned out and aired the result will be surprising. Take it to the house, or anywhere away from the stable, and try to drink it.

THE following is from a German paper. Corporal to soldier: "Why is the blade of the sabre curved instead of straight?" Soldier: "It is curved in order to give more force to the blow." Corporal: "Humbug! The sabre is curved so that it will fit the scabbard. If it were straight, how would it get into the crooked scabbard, blockhead?"

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST
FOUNDED, A.D. 1821

PHILADELPHIA, JANUARY 15, 1887.

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(IN ADVANCE.)

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THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
Philadelphia, Pa.

Publication Office, 726 Sansom St.

TO FRIENDS AND READERS.

We hope that those of our friends and readers who are kindly in the habit of getting up clubs for THE POST, will enter the field as soon as possible this year and try to at least double their old lists. We are hoping to get a great many large sized clubs for the coming year, and trust every one of our present subscribers will make an extra effort to secure one or more new friends for us.

THE POST is much lower in price than any other first-class family paper in the country, and we think it only needs to be laid before the community to be subscribed for at once by thousands to whom it may still be a stranger, save, perhaps, by reputation. Of course we must depend in a great degree upon our present subscribers, friends and readers to show THE POST to their acquaintances and neighbors, and to speak a good word in our behalf. Their return for such efforts must be the pleasure they give to others, the consciousness of assisting in the good work of circulating THE POST, and enabling us to make it better, more useful and entertaining than ever before. Will they try and do it for us? Let each of our present friends and subscribers try to get one new subscriber at least.

Sample copies for the purpose will be sent to those who wish them.

Speaking and Eloquence.

Speaking is one thing; eloquence is quite another. A child can speak, and, it is very well known, can make an impression, sometimes pleasant, sometimes the reverse. We get from the French the well-known terrible child, the loquacious little tot that lets out family secrets and embarrasses the whole party present. A parrot can be taught to speak, and is also sometimes infelicitous. It is told of an eminent clergyman, whose wife liked such birds, that at a clerical gathering in his house, the parrot broke out in very unclerical language, obliging him to explain that it was not in his house, but probably from the sailors, as it came from its native land, that it had learned this dialect. Still more unfortunate was the lady—young, or, at least, unmarried—whose parrot cried out, whenever a gentleman appeared, "Hook him!"

Eloquence is more than speaking. The Latin word for "speak" is *loquor*. It means, according to Quintillian, to "bring out all the things thou hast conceived in the mind, and bring them home to the hearers." It is speaking out of the heart into the heart. If the occasion be not one implying emotion, it is from mind to mind, but as earnestness of feeling and gravity of subjects are usually implied, eloquence is commonly connected in some degree with the production of feeling. Men—and women—can speak with the lips; eloquence is speaking out from the depths within.

There are, of course, what we may call physical essentials to eloquence. The power to articulate so as to keep the attention more on the thing said than on the speaker, is one of these. If a man stammers badly, or has any unfortunate peculiarity, attention is disagreeably fixed on him rather than on the things he wishes to say. Demosthenes is said to have had a natural hesitation of speech and shortness of breath, but to have overcome these difficulties by effort. To accustom himself to speak to a crowd, he declaimed to the waves on the beach.

Among the essentials to eloquence the first is probably the sincerity of the speaker. He may have convictions doubtful as to their truth, but they must be *his* convictions. They must be out of his heart. Hence an "actor" identifies himself, as far as he can, with the character he represents.

A sense of fitness is a second essential. Deep emotion over a trifle, vehement gesticulation and impassioned shouting over a common matter, or, conversely, a light manner over a grave matter—these and such things are not consistent with eloquence. An eloquent man may be betrayed into them, but he is then out of character.

To utter the simplest and most ordinary matters with the arms swinging after the fashion of the old windmills is not the way to call out emotion. It will move not the heart, but the ribs and shoulders with suppressed laughter. Even students can realize the need of this "fitness of things."

To be eloquent one must use words not for their own sakes, but for the sake of the ideas they convey. There is a little unfitness when the person is lost sight of in wonder at the dress. It is so with speaking. Hence simple, transparent language is a good element in eloquence. If a gentleman proposes to "enumerate the characteristics of heterogeneity that differentiate it from homogeniety," the ordinary hearer, not having his Webster "in meeting," is discouraged at the outset. His heart cannot respond.

Time was when educated speakers rolled out long, formal, Johnsonian periods in words largely Latin with English terminations. Recent speakers of true magnetic power speak English in simple, natural sentences. It is possible to be eloquent on this plan. "Heap" or "crowd" is an easier word to say and to understand than "conglomeration."

Feeling is essential to eloquence. The speaker must believe what he says; he must feel it. He must feel that it has some relation to his hearers. An abstract statement—the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles—does not call out feeling; but it is brought out when a father, with a man's heart under royal robes, hears of his son, rebellious but loved for all that, and dead, and forgets his own danger, his dignity, his son's guilt—everything but his affection, and cries out, "O, my son Absalom! my son! my son Absalom! Would God I had died for thee! O, Absalom, my son, my son!"

We saw recently a good hint for speakers who would be eloquent and effective. "Do not," it was said to them, "run on upon long lines. Lines are length without breadth or thickness. Make points. They are seen, are definite, and can be fixed in the memory." We add: "Have at heart interests worth talking about; understand them thoroughly; feel them as true to you; feel them as true to others; then speak of them plainly, truly, fully, feelingly, and you will be eloquent and effective."

To act with common sense, according to the moment, is the best wisdom we know; and the best philosophy to do one's duties, take the world as it comes, submit respectfully to one's lot, bless the goodness which has given us much happiness with it, whatever it is, and despise affectation.

A MAN who never reminds his friends of unwelcome facts or tells them unpleasant truths is sure to be liked; and, when a man of such a turn comes to old age, he is almost sure to be treated with respect. It is true indeed that we should not dissemble and flatter in company; but a man may be very agreeable, strictly consistent with truth and sincerity, by a prudent silence where he cannot concur, and a pleasant assent where he can. Now and then you meet with a person so exactly formed to please that he will gain upon everyone that hears or beholds him; this disposition is not merely the gift of nature, but frequently the effect of much knowledge of the world and a command over the passions. Frequently that which is called candor is merely malice.

No one is able wisely to correct a fault, either in himself or in others, unless he has a fair conception of the virtue which has been transgressed. It is by raising and purifying their ideas of truthfulness that men learn how to regard deceit and what weapons to use against it. It is by upholding the character of honesty that they can truly battle against fraud. It is by elevating their notions of benevolence that they obtain the power to combat selfishness. It is by contemplating man as he should be, and becoming familiar with the conception, that we arrive at the truest conclusions concerning what he is and how he may be improved.

MEN who are drunk with ambition for wealth, or fame, or position, and are straining every nerve in business or politics, or any other all-absorbing object, neglecting everything else in life and pressing swiftly forward to ruined health and an early grave, are less the victims of excitement than of one-sidedness. Could they but be excited in other directions, the whole tenor of their lives would be altered. It is their torpidity to the many claims of life that paves the way to the ultra and fatal devotion to one.

To avoid being chafed at every turn you make in life, always stand right before the world. Make your own world and people it with kindred spirits, that will labor as you labor and live as you live. Throw off the flimsy garb of pride, and never seek for adulation or think yourself better than another, and thus you will meet no obstacles, because they will have nothing to oppose. Pride and self-sufficiency are the irritating elements of existence; and when they are wanting there will be nothing to vex or wound.

THE unsuccessful striver in any department of life may lose his property, his situation, his means of livelihood; all his plans may come to naught and all his efforts be frustrated; but, until he lose his courage, he has not lost all. Instead of sitting down idly to mourn over dead hopes, let him apply himself vigorously to the nearest duty, and his spirits and his fortune will alike rise triumphant from the ashes of the past.

THERE is nothing more dangerous than the rushing into confidences of two ordinary and untried people. Women who open their hearts and their innermost thoughts to every fascinating person they meet must not be surprised to find that all they have wished to keep private is not only known far and wide, but is probably distorted and misrepresented in the very manner most painful to themselves. Some people betray trust from sheer malevolence.

TEMPTATION is a fearful word. It indicates the beginning of a possible series of infinite evils. It is the ringing of an alarm bell whose melancholy sound may reverberate through eternity. Like the sudden, sharp cry of "Fire!" in the night, it should arouse us to instantaneous activity and brace ever muscle to its highest tension.

EVERY man desires success, and the strength of his desire is shown in the earnestness of his efforts; the difference lies in the objects in which he desires to succeed. Earnestness is good, success is good; what we have to watch is that we are earnest in a worthy cause; then our success will be justly a matter of rejoicing.

IF youth knew what age would crave, it would both get and save.

THE love of justice often means no more than the fear of suffering by injustice.

HE overcomes a stout enemy that overcomes his own anger.

The World's Happenings.

Mexican ladies wear imported Parisian hats.

Emperor William never uses visiting cards.

Venison is two cents a pound in Idaho, and deer at that.

A New York bride a few days ago had ten bridesmaids.

Asa Grigg, a "newsboy," of Nashville, Minn., is 80 years old.

Paper shoes are now manufactured in Paris, and are quite fashionable.

Thomas Twelfthtree and Joseph Gotobed are neighbors in a Western State.

America is exporting plum pudding to England in considerable quantities.

Seven women hold the position of County Superintendent of Schools in Illinois.

Mr. Jones, of Waterloo, Kansas, has named his thirteenth son Chestnut Jones.

None of the first five presidents of the United States had sons except John Adams.

A Congressional funeral now-a-days costs the Government from $5,000 to $15,000.

The Sultan of Turkey, like the Czar of Russia, is in constant dread of assassination.

Whooping cough is said to be racking Hugh McCaslin, of Donaldson, Ill., who is 92 years old.

Ionia county, Mich., boasts of a boy only eighteen years old who is six feet eleven inches tall.

Chatsworth, Ill., is proud of one of its citizens, who at the age of 90 is cutting her third set of teeth.

In South Carolina there is no divorce law, and the marriage relation can only be severed by death.

The Copp Blizzard, the Casselton Blizzard and the Elk Point Blizzard are three Dakota publications.

San Francisco has three hundred young women who are heiresses to $500,000 or more each, and all are unmarried.

Lincoln county, Minn., supports a single pauper, and the County Board recently allowed him $6.55 to pay his barber bill.

A practical "joke," which momentarily terrorized him, has driven a young man named Shoehart, of Reading, Pa., crazy.

The weight of cotton has been increased by dishonest dealers by salting it. This plan of thieving was detected by tasting the cotton.

A check for one cent was drawn in New York by the Government in favor of an importer who had paid excess of duty to that extent.

More than fifty colored men hold clerkships in the departments at Washington, at salaries ranging from $1,000 to $1,700 per annum.

A document has been presented to the King of Sweden containing 120,000 signatures to a petition for the suppression of obscene literature.

Forty-two years ago a man with a helper could only weave seven yards of Brussels carpet in a day. Now a girl can weave fifty yards in a day.

Fall River, Mass., is having a case of coachman's bride to gossip over. The latter is the usual "beautiful" girl of 18, but the coachman drove for her grandmother.

Cluverius, the condemned Virginia murderer, receives a great many floral gifts. One young woman recently sent him a design which bore the words "Heaven is mine."

A Washington paper apologizes for an error which appeared in a Christmas poem. Instead of the poet's words "ready at hand," the compositor made them "rarely at home."

France now has a total debt of about $7,200,000,000, or twice as large as that of the United States at the close of the war, and six times as large as our present interest-bearing debt.

A remarkable story comes from Connecticut about the suicide of a man who had succeeded in securing upward of $20,000 insurance on his life, the greater part of it in favor of strangers.

Two young men at Minot, D. T., went out hunting, and mistaking an ox for a deer, shot it. They were arrested and taken to Burlington, and it cost them $50 each to settle the matter.

A Maine woodsman saw a rabbit on the ice, and it did not run away as he drew near. It had hopped into a shallow puddle of water and had stood still till its feet were firmly frozen to the ice.

A Texas pony that cost the county in which it was sold nearly $40 (including legal reward, sheriff's fees and advertising), sold for only $13 and died on the hands of the purchaser three days after the sale.

A big cat, wearing a rose plush velvet blanket and a collar on which are little silver bells, is the pet that a Chicago woman attracts attention with on her promenades the cat following or running ahead of her like a pup.

A cigar lighter ignited the alcohol in the receptacle to which a young man returned it after lighting a cigar in a New York store last summer, and he was burned about the face by the explosion. This week he recovered $500 damages from the proprietor of the store.

A policeman in Newark, N. J., was notified by a stranger the other day that a boy had been drowned in the canal. When he reached the scene of the accident he learned that the drowned boy was his own son, a 12-year-old boy, who had broken through the ice while sliding upon it.

While the question of the advisability of women studying medicine is being discussed, the women are settling it for themselves by entering the medical schools in no inconsiderable number. At Zurich 29 are now pursuing that study; in London 88, and at Paris 173. At the latter place 13 have obtained their diplomas of doctor during the past seven years.

A MEETING.

BY S. W.

A star in the quiet sky
A gleam on the water's breast,
Where the silver ripples die
In perfect rest.

A fragrance of roses shed
Abroad on the windless air,
Where the level cloud-lines spread,
Silent and fair.

A boat that with rhythmic oars
Parts the reluctant deep:
The sound of a voice that soars
Where the clouds sleep.

No sound but the voice that sings
As the glad oars swifter move,
And the dark tide nearer brings
Two hearts that love.

One has journeyed fast and far,
One has waited long to greet.
Come hence! Only you pale star
Shall watch them meet!

His Matchmaking.

BY R. L. PURLEY.

"OH, Jack, what on earth shall we do?"

"Well, what's the matter now, little woman? Is the house on fire, or have you upset my last drop of turpentine?" And Jack Melford turned to look at his young wife, who was disconsolately examining a letter she had just received from the postman.

"Read that, Jack, and you'll see for yourself"—handing the highly-scented epistle to her husband, who sniffed at it for a moment with comic disgust, and then read aloud—

"My dear Margaret—The letter announcing your return from Italy and your establishment at Hatton was very welcome, not only as giving us a hope of seeing a little more of you both, but from a selfish point of view"—"Not a doubt of that, ma'am!" interpolated Jack—"as I am going to ask you to help me out of a difficulty. Maude has been, as I told you in my last, growing more and more difficult to manage. Since Sir Ralph Alverton openly announced his intention of making her his heiress, she has become simply unbearable, and I am in a daily terror that she will affront him in some way, and in consequence ruin her prospects. You must know the old gentleman has an intense and utter aversion to artists of all kinds of sorts—'long-haired, slumpering puppies,' he politely calls them. Well, Maude, always romantic and mad after cleverness of all kinds, is doubly crazy just now. She is always complaining that, since the improvement in her prospects, she is beset by a lot of young men who look on her simply as an itinerant money-bag, to be caught and utilized by the first comer. Naturally young men like a girl with money, and I very much doubt if Maude's talented idols would not be of very much the same opinion as the poor fellows she insists on dubbing 'uncle Ralph's Philistines.' Where on earth she gets her romance from I'm sure I can't tell—not from me, that's certain!"

"Humph! No; I exonerate her fully from that charge," muttered Jack.

"But, to cut a long story short," the letter went on, "she was raving the other day about some Signor or other, when Sir Ralph turned on her and told her plainly that, if she married an artist of any kind, not one penny of his money would she ever see. Maude never said a word on the subject; but her thoughts were pretty evident. Lord James Bertie proposed to her the next day, and, though he was in every way most suitable, and the match would have been most pleasing to Sir Ralph, the headstrong girl scarcely gave the poor young man time to finish his proposal ere she refused him. Naturally, her uncle, whose heart was set on the match, is annoyed; and between the two I feel very wretched. So I am writing to ask a great favor of you, namely, to receive Maude on a visit for a little while. I have told her of my intentions to write to you on the subject, and she seems to catch at the idea of getting away from home; in fact, romantic and foolish even as she is, she feels the difficulty of her position as regards her uncle. Her only message is—'Tell Margaret, if she will really have me, let it be as her cousin in name as well as in fact. For Heaven's sake, let me for a little while drop "Miss Alverton, the heiress," and enjoy myself as plain "Maude Thorneleigh."' Now my dear Margaret, can and will you grant this request? I need not try to describe what a relief it will be to me, if you do. Please explain this to your husband for me.

"I consider I am asking a great favor, in begging you to receive Maude in this way, than I should hope for from any one but your father's daughter; but let me add that I consider this visit entirely my affair, and that I will not hear of your being put to any expense, which I know, with your limited means, you can ill afford. I am particularly anxious that Maude should see an entirely different phase of life from that to which she has lately been accustomed; and your dear husband's being an artist is an additional advantage."

"So that's it, is it?" laughed Jack. "The old lady wishes her impressionable daughter to have a nearer view of Bohemia, I see! Well, perhaps she's right"—with a half sigh. "Our life is quite humdrum enough to knock on the head all brilliant idealizations of an artist's life. Never mind, little woman," he added quickly, noticing his wife's grieved look; "if we are not a pair of Crusoes, there's enough for bread and water, and even at times for cheese. Kisses are gratis; so there's not much to complain of in the life; and, even if you do darn socks, dear heart, instead of making the pretty embroidery of old days, I must confess I am not Bohemian enough to prefer worn linen to neatly-mended ones."

"But, you see, Jack, the point is, I do owe aunt Eleanor a great deal: she was very good to me when my dear father died, and I should like to help her, for I know that her step-daughter tries to help her a good bit."

"Bound to, if the girl's worth her salt!" muttered Jack.

"But I don't," continued Mrs. Melford, "like the notion of this absurd farce about her name, or of your being bored by a fashionable esthetic young lady, such as Maude is described by every one to be."

"Well, the change of name won't bother me, and, as to the neighbors, there is no one who will care two straws if she calls herself 'Miss Smith' or 'Miss Alverton.' I confess I shall grudge losing our *tete a-tete* a little; but still, if it's a case of your being able to do a kindness to a person you feel grateful to, I'll offer myself up on the altar of your gratitude. Besides, I've always the studio as a refuge; so, on the whole, my share of the sacrifice is not alarming. I'm far more sorry for you, for I see plainly enough this step-cousin of yours will tax you pretty severely. Well, if 'twere done, 'twere best done quickly; so sit down, and write to your respected aunt that we will do our best for her art-stricken daughter."

Margaret Melford acted on her husband's suggestion, and in a few days received a letter announcing that Miss Alverton, alias Thorneleigh, would arrive on the following day.

Accordingly at the proper time Margaret was at the station, watching for her cousin's train. She had not seen Maude since their childhood, as, during her later visits to Mrs. Alverton, Maude had always been at school.

When the train stopped, a girl alighted, and looked about her somewhat helplessly. She being the only lady who left the train, Margaret then went up and introduced herself.

In a few minutes, bright active little Mrs. Melford had collected her cousin's various boxes, and consigned them to the porter; then, turning to Maude, she said—

"Our house is quite close to the station, and the porter will bring your luggage over safely—that is," she added, looking inquiringly at her companion, "if you are sure you won't mind the walk."

"No, thanks; the air is so delicious, pray let us walk."

They presented a striking contrast. Both were good-looking, well-bred women; but while Mrs. Melford was a tiny brunette, all life, energy and fun, whose trim dainty dress seemed the only possible garment for her pretty figure, Miss Alverton was a stately dreamy blonde, her undeniably beautiful face sadly marred by its languid discontented expression, a woman to whom luxury seemed an actual necessity.

They passed along the lane that led to Hillside Cottage—the Melfords's home—in almost unbroken silence, Margaret wondering whether this were his cousin's usual manner, and, if it was, how she and Jack were ever going to stand it; but the exclamation of delight that broke from Maude when they reached the garden-gate reassured her somewhat.

The scene was certainly lovely.

The cottage was built on the side of a hill—whence its name—sloping gently down to the little trout-stream that rushed along at the bottom of the valley, the hill on the opposite rising steeply and thickly wooded; the view to the right was shut in by the hills, while to the left it embraced a fertile plain dotted with pretty farms to the blue shimmering line of the sea on the distant horizon.

Jack met them as they entered, and was duly introduced.

Even his bright courtesy was no match for Miss Alverton's languid coolness; and after one or two attempts at conversation, he turned to his wife, saying—

"You had better show your cousin her room, Margaret. I told Jane to have tea ready for you in the drawing-room, thinking you would both be tired."

Margaret accordingly took Maude into the house, showed her her room, helped her with her wraps, and, welcoming her warmly to Hillside, said how sincerely she hoped the visit would be a very pleasant one.

"You are very kind," was all the answer she received, in Maude's cool unmoved tones; and, with a sense of being rebuffed, Mrs. Melford left her cousin, and went off to find her husband.

"She's a beauty," quoth Jack; "but what a cool hand!"

"She's very shy or very reserved—I cannot tell which. I only trust that she will not continue such an icicle!"

"Well my little woman, if kindness can thaw her, you will manage it, I know;" and, so saying, Jack drew his wife into the studio to judge of all his progress during the morning.

But Maude did not thaw either that day or the next, or in fact for many days. Warm-hearted little Mrs. Melford was quite chilled by her coldness, reproaching herself bitterly for not being able to induce the girl to make herself more sociable or at home.

Jack spent most of his time in his studio, and did not conceal his reason from his wife, who blamed herself, on his account also, for bringing such a "wet blanket" into his house.

One day however, having left Maude to amuse herself as best she could in the garden, while she herself attended to some housewifely duty, on her return she saw her guest and her husband talking earnestly together.

Jack had thrown off his usual half-sarcastic manner, and was evidently trying to explain something, whilst Maude, all her composure gone, was listening intently, almost anxiously, now and then putting in a few words, which at that distance, Margaret fancied were pleading.

At last Maude held out her hand to Jack, who pressed it warmly; then she turned and ran into the house without noticing her hostess.

Jack wandered on down the garden, smoking, and so deep in thought that he never noticed Margaret till she laid her hand gently upon his arm.

It was promptly seized, and, drawing her to him, Jack kissed her passionately.

"My darling, thank Heaven I have you! I declare"—he continued, flushing, and laughing uneasily—"that girl is a witch!"

"Why? What has she been saying?"

"Oh, I don't know! Yes, I do! Look here Margaret! I came out just now for a breath of fresh air, for I had been working hard all the morning, when I found your cousin sitting under the old cedar. She looked so utterly downcast that I could not help asking her what was the matter. My question evidently upset her composure, for to my horror she burst into a flood of tears. Of course then I could not leave her, and had to quiet her as best I could. At last the whole story came out; she gave me a full account of her life, and a pleasant one it was! By Jove, I only wonder the poor girl has stood it so long! And, child, when I heard her dismal little egotistical views of life, every wish even for better things crushed down to a dead level of worldly prosperity and good form, her only clear idea a half-cynical distrust of every one round her, her only knowledge that of things of which she ought to be as innocent as a baby, my heart ached for the girl! Then I thought of you, dear, and all you were to me, and all this girl might and should be with the right training, and so gave her a straightforward bit of my mind. She took it awfully well; but it did not stop her crying, so I was not by any means sorry when she bolted in the house. But it set me thinking of the future, and, if we should have a dear little girl, what a responsibility it would be; and, as you came up, I was just thanking Heaven for the little woman who is of course the plague of my life, but who, after all, is my best chance of ever being or doing anything!"

Mrs. Melford pressed her husband's arm lovingly, and they wandered on together, making plans for Maude Alverton.

When that young lady reappeared, she was as cool and composed as ever, and Margaret found herself wondering if she had dreamt of the scene beneath the cedar.

From that day she watched her cousin closely, and the result of her watching was not altogether satisfactory. Maude, becoming used to her cousins, gradually showed more and more of her own true self, and, whilst many traits only tended to increase their liking for her, her defects, which, to do her justice, arose chiefly from her education, became more evident. She often let her hosts see—unintentionally truly, but none the less plainly—that she missed the daily luxuries which at home she was accustomed to consider simple necessaries. On these occasions Mrs. Melford winced, but Jack Melford only laughed, sometimes chaffing her openly and unmercifully, at others shrugging his shoulders and petting her as if she were a spoilt child.

If Mrs. Alverton's idea had been that the narrow means and commonplace daily life of the Melfords would disenchant her step-daughter, used to luxury, and, in spite of her imaginary Bohemianism, as fond of it as most pretty women, that good lady was grievously mistaken. In spite of every disadvantage, the tiny household was as perfectly kept and dainty as that of far more assuming people, and, if more fell on Margaret's shoulders than would have been the case had they been better off, she kept the fact to herself, and no one but her husband would have guessed there was any strain.

Certainly Maud never saw anything to shake her belief in the ideality of an artist's life; although perhaps she realised how much Margaret's unceasing and dainty management had to do with the comfort of their daily life, she did full justice to Jack's good natured indifference to their scanty means and his bright merry way of enjoying and making the most of everything.

So much was this the case that Margaret became oppressed by a secret fear that her visitor was unconsciously growing far more attracted by Jack and his pseudo-Bohemianism than was altogether good for herself or in accordance with "aunt Eleanor's" views.

The fact was that Maude, accustomed to the mercenary deference of her interested suitors, and of the toadies of whom her mother's "dear friends" chiefly consisted, found an inexpressible fascination in Jack's cool assumption of authority, and soon learned to treat his wishes with unquestioning respect as Margaret did; in fact, she was far more obedient, and often amused Mrs. Melford by a way she had of treating any suggestion of Jack's as an unquestionable command.

One day Margaret appeared in the studio where Jack was hard at work.

"What is it, dear?" he asked, noticing her troubled face.

"I'm rather worried, Jack dear, that's the truth. Do you know—don't laugh please!—I almost fear that Maude——"

"Well, that Maude—what?" questioned her husband, mimicking her anxious tones, yet watching her keenly all the time with half-closed eyes.

"Why, that Maude"—and Mrs. Melford hesitated—"Maude is getting to care more for you than is altogether good for her."

The confession evidently cost the poor little woman dearly, and she looked piteously at her husband as she made it. It was not however received as solemnly as it was made, for after looking at her a moment as if thunderstruck, Jack burst into a peal of laughter.

"My dear child, you're demented!" he gasped between the paroxysms. "What on earth put such a notion into your silly little head?"

"I expect I'd better tell you everything, Jack. You see, this morning, when we were in the garden, we got talking of the future—mine and hers—and she burst out into a tirade that frightened me more effectually than her old callous condition ever did. You know aunt Eleanor——"

"Yes, dear, I know aunt Eleanor meant me to act as an artistic scarecrow, and it certainly would be very disgraceful of me if I became, however, involuntarily, a bait. But really your notion is too absurd, 'pon my word it is!" and a fresh burst of laughter interrupted Jack's protest.

A little reassured by her husband's amusement at her terror, Mrs. Melford allowed herself to be reasoned out of most of it, and, much comforted, left Jack to resume his work.

No sooner was she gone, however, than Jack's manner changed. He still looked amused; but he was worried too, and smoked fast and furiously as he walked up and down the studio.

"Bother the woman!" he muttered. "A nice pickle that old woman has got us into. Poor little Madge! 'Twas a shame to laugh at her in that way; but what could I do? Maude, poor girl, would break her heart if she thought we had either of us guessed her silly little secret; and, besides, the idea of aunt Eleanor's rage if she knew the truth is too absurd! That's what comes of my setting up as a Mentor to female youth and beauty with a taste for theatricals and art. Oh, hang the women! No wonder those old fellows painted the tempter as a snake with a woman's head! As soon as a second woman gets into the matrimonial Eden, there's bound to be a row. I might have known what the young woman was by that freak about her name—Miss Thorneleigh, indeed!

"Poor girl! I suppose she fancies every man, woman, and child is after those money-bags of hers! Well, it's a form of trial I'm not liable to suffer from, any way!" As he turned, he caught sight of a photograph lying on the floor, and unconsciously picked up and looked at it. "Dear old Gerald! How well he looks! Wouldn't he laugh if he knew of my predicament! By Jove, what a notion! See if I don't pay you out, for all this bother, Miss Alverton—Thorneleigh!" And he sat down and began writing as follows—

"Dear old Jerry—If you have not totally forgotten your promise or changed your mind, it may interest you to know that we—i.e., myself and the partner of my joys and woes—have returned from Italy and have set up for the present at Hatton, a jolly little village on the G.W.R. As we have a fairly comfortable spare room, the sooner you redeem your pledge and come and see us the better I shall like it. I am not going to write a yarn about your welcome, etcetera. If you are the same Gerald Foulis as of old at Eton and Oxford, you know how glad I shall be to see you, and thank goodness, in the matter of my old friends, at all events, Margaret and I are one. I heard from Daventry of your return from India, and of your accession of rank. From what he told me, I fear the latter is no great subject of congratulation, and that you were far better off in the old days.

"Do, for charity's sake, come and stay with us! My wife is a dear, cheery little body, a *tete-a-tete* with whom I enjoy immensely; but she has lately developed a she-cousin, and I feel daily more and more that, alone and unassisted, I cannot make head against the pair of them; so do come and oblige "Your old friend,

"JACK.

"P.S.—Look here! Don't, for goodness sake, fall in love with either of the girls. Both are pretty; but one's engaged, and the other hasn't a halfpenny. By-the-way, I've dropped the 'Lord' in your case, and announced you as plain 'Gerald Foulis.'"

Jack gave a sigh of relief when this letter was finished, and soon after dropped it himself into the post.

That evening, sitting under the cedar with his wife and her cousin, he remarked casually—

"By-the-by, Madge, you'll have to make the gable-room tidy. I shall expect an old friend, Gerald, commonly called Jerry Foulis, for a few days' visit. I think you'll both like him; he's an artist, like myself, only having a large enough income to save him from absolute starvation, he's a good deal less industrious."

Little Mrs. Melford's bright eyes opened wide at this sudden announcement, but she said nothing. Maude likewise was silent, and what Jack called her "spoilt-child" expression deepened visibly.

"My dear Jack," exclaimed Mrs. Melford, a little later, when they were alone together, "who on earth is this friend? Oh, dear, why did you ask him, with Maude here? An artist, too, and good-looking, and young of course?"

"One question at a time my dear girl. Take it easy, and I'll do my best to satisfy

you; so now to begin. He is Gerald Foulis an old school-mate and college friend of mine, and he comes now because it is most convenient to him. I cannot say I regret his coming, for really, dear, two is company, and three is none, as the saying runs; and your cousin, though I freely admit she improves vastly on acquaintance, is a little heavy on my hands. As to Jerry's being an artist, surely I did not make him one, and, if it is any comfort to you, he's a wofully bad one, poor old boy! As to his youth and good looks—well, he's a contemporary of mine, so he is no Methuselah; about his looks I'm sure he can't say anything, you women have such funny ideas on that point; all I know is, he is six feet high, fair, curly-haired, as strong as a horse and about as honest and reliable. There—if you want to know more, you must wait till you see him! Maude and your beloved aunt must take things as they come; I cannot cut all my friends for the sake of that old lady and her aesthetic daughter. As far as the man goes I think Miss Maude might easily do a good deal worse than fall in love with Jerry Foulis."

With this declaration poor anxious Margaret had to be satisfied, for not a word more on the subject was to be got out of Jack. It cannot be said that his silence made the ladies indifferent to the expected visitor; on the contrary, they only seemed to think about him the more, a result which Jack very probably anticipated.

Two days later, he looked up from his breakfast to remark—

"I say, Margaret—Foulis will be here today, so that's all right!"—a piece of news that did not make Mrs. Melford more cheerful.

Maude passed that afternoon in her room, on the pretence that the heat affected her; the truth was that she was thoroughly cross at the coming of this intruder.

Her life during the past weeks had been so happy that she could not bear to think of any alteration in it; she had a nervous dread that any change must be for the worse.

The old friend would probably engross Jack; and, though she had honestly grown very fond of Margaret, she was obliged to confess to herself that he with his frank comradeship and calm self-respect, was the principal attraction to her at Hillside.

Getting tired of her solitude, she went to the window to see if either Jack or his wife was about.

As she did so, the gate swung open, and a young man entered. He looked up and seeing the pretty face at the window, raised his hat.

"Is that Jerry Foulis, I wonder?" thought Maude. "He is certainly handsome, and looks clever too. How different from poor old uncle] Ralph's Philistines!"—and, with a half sigh, for which she would have found it hard to account satisfactorily, she made herself presentable previously to going down.

The stranger was Gerald, who, in the meantime, had entered the house, had unearthed Jack, and had been introduced to Mrs. Melford, with whom he was evidently charmed.

When Maude entered, he appeared much struck, and devoted himself to her during the evening. He was equally attentive subsequently, following her about, waiting on her, singing with her, and taking care of her generally, in a fashion that filled Jack with great, if secret amusement, and caused Mrs. Melford—who, whilst liking her guest immensely, had a feeling of acting treacherously by "aunt Eleanor"—great anxiety.

Maude was obliged to confess to herself that the anticipated disturber of their peace was, in fact, the pleasantest of a very pleasant party, and, if had as an artist—on which point she had grave doubts—he was unsurpassable as a companion.

The addition to their party made little alteration in their way of life. The morning was spent by Jack and Gerald in the studio, whilst Mrs. Melford saw to her housekeeping, and Maude amused herself as best she could.

In the afternoon they all lounged about till tea-time, or went on long exploring or pic-nic excursions. Had she been cate-chised, Maude could not have failed to admit how completely her interest in Jack was fading away, and how intensely she looked forward to the afternoons and Gerald's companionship.

Matters had gone on in this fashion for some time, when one day, as Maude and Gerald made their way into the garden prepared for a walk, they found Jack and his wife still sitting under the cedar.

Jack announced that Margaret was not feeling very well, that he meant to sit quiet and keep company, and concluded by telling the young folks to go off for their stroll. They, nothing loath, sauntered off down the valley, talking on every conceivable subject but the one nearest their hearts—namely, their approaching separation, for Gerald was to leave at the end of the week.

At last the conversation turned on the Melfords.

"What a happy marriage theirs is!" said Maude, in reply to a remark of Gerald's.

"Yes, it is," he answered warmly, "and thank Heaven for it! Jack's a right good fellow, and deserves a good wife, if ever man did—even as good a one as Mrs. Melford. Still, I always fancied that Jack's matrimonial prospects were not good, that he would be the victim of some adventures—I can't exactly say why; and I confess my heart sank when I heard of his engagement to a regular London girl like Margaret Thornleigh. I beg your pardon," he added quickly; "I forgot she was your cousin. You can the more easily forgive me, seeing, as you do, how fully now I appreciate her merits—she is about the most perfect wife I have ever seen."

"Yes," answered Maude slowly, "I suppose she is. I dare say you wonder at my coldness; but, though I do honestly admire Margaret, I have seen so little of her till lately that, although she is my cousin, I seem to know scarcely anything of her."

"Of course from a worldly point of view, it was a preposterous match, for poor old Jack has not a penny, thanks to that bank failure; and I suppose Mrs. Melford was not a daughter of Croesus. Yet I can't say the absence of money has disturbed their happiness much."

"Do you think money a necessity of life, then?"

"Well, I suppose a certain amount is—at least, if one is, to keep on a satisfactory footing with one's butcher and baker. Personally I hate the feeling of always having two ends which not only won't overlap, but require violent exertion to bring them in sight of one another. But then, you see, I am a very poor man—worse luck!—and accordingly think highly of the good things I have no chance of attaining to. Still, there is one thing, poor as I am," he continued hotly, "I could not do, and that is marry for money. Fancy, 'My horses, my house'! Ugh! Horrible!"

"Well; but all rich people don't talk like that."

"Perhaps not," rejoined Gerald, with a half-laugh at his own vehemence; "but, you see, the only two heiresses I ever knew anything of did—at least, one used those very words, and the other clearly thought them. You look scared at my heat, Miss Thornleigh; but judge for yourself. I had a very old and dear friend, who married abroad. He was a poor man, certainly, but no better liked fellow lived; and we all rejoiced over Foster's luck when we heard he had married a rich and attractive woman. A short time after their marriage I met them, and of all the awful warnings he was the worst. She was certainly pretty and undoubtedly rich; but the life she led was too awful. Everything was 'my' and 'mine'—never 'ours.' The very cheques were hers. Don't be astonished at my knowledge. She openly told every one. She actually did me the honor to consult me as to what could be found for her husband to do. 'Not that he need work, you understand,' she informed me, 'for I have plenty for both of us, luckily; but is a good thing for a man to have employment—it keeps him out of mischief—and I fear Archie is rather extravagant for a man in his circumstances.' Brr! It took me weeks to get the taste of that woman out of my mouth!"

"You were unlucky, certainly. But you were speaking of two heiresses. Was the second as bad?"

"Well, in common fairness, I can't say, for I never actually met her. It was her treatment of a poor fellow, a friend of mine, that set me against her. She is, I believe, a very pretty girl, well known in London society—a Miss Alverton. Did you ever meet her? It seems to me that a few years since she was not nearly so well off as she is now; and, when Dick Warburton proposed, his offer was very willingly accepted, though the marriage was deferred till she was a year or two older and Dick had got through his time in India. He went off; but meanwhile an old uncle turned up and announced his intention of making the young lady his heiress. Of this Dick was told nothing, and he had no idea in the change of his lady-love's condition. Just as he was starting for home, however, he received a letter from Mrs. Alverton, coolly telling him that altered circumstances precluded her daughter from fulfilling her engagement, requesting him to return the young lady's letters, and adding that his own and all his presents had been sent to his agent. Furious, he went home as fast as he could, and there found the altered circumstances were Miss Alverton's expected fortune and engagement to a young man whose title and position the uncle considered a proper equivalent for his niece's beauty and his own wealth. Mrs. Alverton tried hard to prevent any interview; but Dick was determined, and at last managed to see the young lady, who simply told him she never cared for him, and had only been induced to tolerate him by her mother, winding up by plainly showing her delight at being rid of him. Such was my second heiress. Now what do you say to my dislike of rich women?"

Luckily for Maude, Gerard Foulis had walked on beside her, looking straight before him; otherwise the growing pallor and agitation of his companion would certainly have betrayed her.

She suffered horribly, for in fact it was an episode in her own life Gerald had related, and truthfully enough.

From not knowing some of the persons concerned however, he had failed to realize how far less blameworthy the poor girl was than the excited account of his friend had led him to believe.

Neither knew how the daughter had been compromised by the artful scheming of Mrs. Alverton, who had led Captain Warburton on to an extent Maude would never have permitted.

The harsh view Gerald took of the affair hurt her terribly, and it was only with difficulty that she could steady herself. Gerald broke the silence after a minute or two, saying in a lighter tone—

"I beg your pardon for this long yarn, but Dick's story has been running in my head all day, and my heart aches, whenever I think of him, poor old fellow—for he has never got over the blow; and, though he'll probably live long and, I trust, see good days, there's a bit of the best part of life gone from him, and he will never be the same. There—I am bad as ever! But you have granted me so much license in the way of speaking my thoughts that I grow encroaching. Forgive me."

"Readily enough. Why, it is a pleasure to me to feel you care for my sympathy!"

"Care for it! Why, Miss Thornleigh—Maude, do you really not know how precious it is to me—when it is all the world to me? Look here! I'm not a clever fellow like Jack; I'm a very poor man too; I know I have nothing to win your love with; but, if loving you and you only could do it, faith, there are few men could beat me, I think! It has been growing on me since the day I first saw your face at the window over the porch yonder, till now it has taken such hold of me that I hardly know how I shall live if you cannot care for me. Tell me, darling; will you give your dear self to me, or must I go away heart-broken and dejected?"

Maude, utterly taken aback by this sudden appeal, and still shaken by her recent agitation, could not speak; but, if her lips, were silent, her eyes apparently were not, for the next minute she found herself clasped tightly in Gerald's arms, and kisses were showered upon her fast ere she recovered strength and sense to release herself.

"Mr. Foulis—Gerald—you don't know me! This is utter madness!" she exclaimed.

"If it is, I infinitely prefer it to sanity," was the cool rejoinder; and Gerald again drew her to him, his eyes glowing with love and mischief. "Still I hardly see why it should be madness either. We shall be paupers, doubtless; but, as we agreed just now, that does not seem seriously to interfere with Jack and his wife's happiness. Besides, I can work, I know, any way."

With a start some considerable time later they bethought themselves of the time, and turned towards home. Their confusion was not diminished on their meeting Jack and his wife close to the garden-gate.

"So here you are!" said Jack, looking sharply at them. "The good wife chose to fancy you had fallen over the line, or had been stung to death by adders, and buried by the robins, like babes in the wood; and, as nothing would suit her ladyship but going off to discover the whereabouts of your mortal remains, I was in duty bound to accompany her."

They turned, and all went into the house, Maude at heart very thankful it was so close.

As soon as the two ladies had gone in, Gerald seized Jack's hand and shook it violently, exclaiming incoherently as to his gratitude to Jack and the fulness of his own happiness, till Jack suddenly caught him by the shoulders, pushed him down into a chair, and himself dropped into another, dryly remarking—

"Now, just calm yourself, young man, and try to tell me coherently what all the excitement is about. At present all I know is that I am a trump, that you are the happiest fellow alive, and that some third person is an angel—all three possibly true enough statements, but scarcely explanatory."

"It all came from that walk. You see, when I went on with Miss—with Maude—we began to talk of you and your marriage, and then—I dont know how—we found ourselves discussing poverty, money, *et-cetera*, and I told her of the horror I had of heiresses, thanks to poor Warburton's affair with Miss Alverton——"

"The deuce you did!" put in Jack, very much amused.

"Yes, and then—and then—— Oh, hang it, man, I can't tell how it all came about exactly! But I found myself kissing her, and it was particularly jolly. You know," continued Gerald meditatively, "she's an awfully nice girl to kiss!"

"Well, you are the coolest hand!" laughed Jack. "I wonder if Miss Maude reciprocates the sentiment? But, to come to more serious matters, may one inquire what you two young people propose living on?"

"Oh, I shall have to buckle to, and try for some appointment! I think I can manage that somehow, I expect there'll be a deuce of a row about it, though. The mater will be wild, for I know she has some fearful heiress in tow for me; and truly I think that prospect added a zest to the present affair."

"Well, my dear fellow, I'm prepared to admit that you've reckoned up your own share of the row; but how about Maude's people?"

"Maude's people!" repeated Gerald slowly. "I never thought of them. Somehow I had a notion she had none. I suppose I fancied I should have to come and ask your consent, if I thought of the matter at all—which, now that I come to consider, I don't believe I ever did. The worst is, I never told her about myself—not that it matters much, after all, for I can tell her at any time."

"No, thank you!" put in Jack sharply. "You'll do nothing of the sort. Maude most certainly has got 'people,' and I will only undertake to smooth your way with them on the condition that you promise faithfully to sink 'Lord Foulis' till I give you leave to resume your name."

"Oh; come, I say!" protested Gerald.

"'Tis my only condition; but I stick to it. You will not breathe a syllable about your title till I give you leave, or I shall leave you in the lurch; and, if I do, I wouldn't give much for your chances."

This shot told; the promise was given, and Gerald departed to dress for dinner and dream of his happiness. But Jack's troubles were not over. Hardly was Gerald gone when Margaret entered.

"Oh, Jack, Jack, what on earth shall we do? What will aunt Eleanor say? Really, Jack dear, it was foolish of you having Gerald Foulis here now: and be an artist too!"

"Why, my child, don't you like him?".

"Like him! That's not the question. I like him immensely, and think he would be a capital husband for Maude; but her mother—her uncle?"

"Her mother and her uncle my dear, will do what dozens of mothers and uncles before them have done—bluster a little, growl, grumble and give in. Now don't you go fretting yourself ill, little woman; it will all come right. Just tell me—has she said anything to you?"

"Nothing exactly. Only just now she turned and kissed me—which, by-the-way, she has never done before of her own accord—and began to say something; but she then checked herself, asking me at what time the post went out, and begging me to excuse her appearing at dinner, as her walk and the heat had given her a headache."

"If that is the case, my dear, let us dine. I am not a lover, and I am hungry."

Meanwhile Maude, having got rid of anxious little Madge, sat down to her desk and wrote—

"Dear Mother—What your real intention may have been in sending me here I cannot certainly say, though at times I fancy I can guess it. If I am right in my conjecture, your plan has simply failed. Mr. Melford and Margaret have been kindness itself, and my life during the past two months have been a very happy one. About three weeks since Mr. Foulis, a good friend of Mr. Melford's, came on a visit; he is an artist, very clever, very pleasant, and very poor. You see I put the facts clearly, if badly, before you. This afternoon knowing nothing more of me than he has seen here, thinking me simply Margaret's cousin, as poor as himself, he proposed, and I have accepted him. That this will cause you some annoyance is, I fear, inevitable; and for this I am truly sorry, as I know that you have intended to do the very best and kindest for me. At the same time, I must tell you frankly, my mind is thoroughly made up, and as long as Gerald Foulis cares to have me, I am his. I am his. I may also add that he has not the slightest idea of my former prospects; and I certainly shall not tell him, for, from one or two unfortunate circumstances, he has a perfect horror of heiresses. If you do not care to tell uncle Ralph my news, I will do so.

"Please let me have an answer as soon as may be, and believe me,

"Your affectionate daughter,

MAUDE ALVERTON."

Having despatched this letter, Maude felt easier. She had now put matters out of her own hands, and, be the issue what it might, intended fully to keep troth with Gerald.

The next morning passed uneasily. Margaret was unaffectedly frightened, dreading the following day's post. Maude, though determined, yet looked forward with dismay to the struggle she well knew was before her; still, she thoroughly gave herself up to the happiness of the moment, fairly startling Margaret and Jack by her wild spirits and girlish devotion to her lover, as if bent on indemnifying herself beforehand for future trouble.

Gerald was thoroughly happy, though even he was worried when thinking of his promise to Jack, and also of his mother. The Honorable Mrs. Foulis had cost her husband his father's affection and his share of the parental inheritance; and, when the eldest son died unexpectedly in the hunting-field, the old lord bequeathed to a favorite niece every sixpence he could possibly alienate, leaving his grandson Gerald (the father being long since dead) nothing but the title and the wreck of the family property. Thus Gerald, when he returned to take up his inheritance, found that there was only two great cause for his mother's oft repeated dictum, "Gerald must marry money," and soon had a shrewd suspicion that the worldly old lady's affection for her "sweet cousin" Lord Foulis's niece and heiress, could be accounted for by her desire once more to bring together the Foulis title and property. His first sight of Maude dissipated even the faintest idea of such an arrangement; and now he was firmly resolved that in the present matter he would have his own way, even if, to get it, he had to go to the Colonies in search of a living.

But, when counting on the morrow's post, they had not reckoned on Mrs. Alverton's energy. They were all, save Jack, sitting under the cedar in the afternoon, when a fly drove up to the door, and out stepped Mrs. Alverton herself.

Gerald instinctively drew Maude to him, while Margaret sprang forward to meet her aunt, and if possible to stem the first rush of her anger.

"My dear aunt, how good of you! We did not expect——"

"I suppose not, Margaret; but a letter I received from Maude this morning made me uneasy, and I determined to come at once and see her. Maude, my dear"—and she turned to her daughter, who recovering from her surprise, now came forward calmly and quietly—"your uncle has returned and I fear I must cut short your pleasant visit, even at the risk of interfering with some of your arrangements. Sir Ralph has brought back Lord James Bertie."

"I hardly see what possible connection there can be between Lord James Bertie's movements and mine," exclaimed Maude haughtily; "and, as matters stand at present, I do not think Sir Ralph would care very much to see me. But, mother, you seem strangely to overlook the cause of my yesterday's letter. Allow me to introduce Mr. Gerald Foulis, my future husband."

"It's all her height and statuesque beauty," said Mrs. Melford later, when

talking over the scene with her husband. "I was shaking in my shoes, and I'm certain Gerald would have preferred being a few miles away; but there she stood so calm and haughty that I should have thought her utterly unmoved had not her face worn the cold hard look it had when she first came to us."

Mrs. Alverton seemed at first struck dumb; but in a very few minutes she recovered herself. A perfect tornado of words fell upon their ears; her suave company-manners were thrown to the winds, and the natural temper of the woman showed itself.

She railed at Maude for her selfish ingratitude, her monstrous folly, in throwing up Sir Ralph's heiress-ship for the sake of a penniless adventurer, of whom no one knew anything. Then she opened the flood-gates of her wrath upon Gerald, declaring in the same breath that he was scheming to secure Maud's fortune, that he intended to deprive her of her inheritance, but that Sir Ralph Alverton would not allow his niece to throw herself away in such a fashion, even if Miss Alverton were such a consummate fool as to do so.

Gerald had hitherto stood quietly at Maude's side, as if asserting his right to protect her even from her mother; but, when he heard her name, he turned towards her exclaiming—

"Miss Alverton! Maude, what does this mean?"

"It means, sir," exclaimed the angry mother, "that that silly girl will lose all claim to Sir Ralph Alverton's estate and affection, simply from listening to your foolish wooing. Don't imagine you will profit by her fortune! Not one penny will she get if she marries an artist."

"Oh, hush, mother, hush!" cried Maude, driven at last from her composure. "Don't look at me like that, Gerald! I know I deceived you about my name: but you do not know what a life mine has been; and, when I saw how you despised poor Maude Alverton, I had not the courage to tell you I was she. But do trust me; for indeed there are two sides even to Captain Warburton's story, black as it seemed to you!"

Margaret could scarcely believe her ears. Was this passionate, pleading woman her cold stately cousin?

Even Mrs. Alverton dropped the handkerchief with which she had been hiding her angry face to stare at her daughter.

Gerald looked longing at the beautiful girl who, reversing their position, now pleaded so anxiously for the love that but a few minutes since it had been his greatest happiness to offer her.

Just at this moment Jack came out of his studio, with a preternatural expression, somewhat belied however by the mirth in his eyes. He greeted Mrs. Alverton with an over courtesy.

"So you have discovered the lovers! Really it is something to be thankful for, that the folly of these young people should have procured us the pleasure of a visit from you, but a poor artist must work, as you know."

"Mr. Melford, I do not know which to admire most, the calm way in which you ignore my justly-wounded feelings or the extraordinary view you seem to take of Maude's engagement to—to——"—and she stopped, unable, in her anger, to remember the name of her daughter's unwelcome suitor.

"Now really this is too bad! returned Jack. "I should have thought that some one might have introduced *monsieur le futur* to you! Allow me"—and, placing his hand on Gerald's shoulder, he forced him to face the astonished lady—"allow me to introduce to you Gerald, Lord Foulis, fourteenth or fifteenth—which is it, Jerry?—baron of that name, of the Grange, Downshire, and Auchindarach. I think, Miss Alverton, that just now you had a slight difficulty with this gentleman as to your own name. May I suggest that you put the one deception against the other and settle matters quietly—with Mrs. Alverton's permission, of course?" he added sarcastically.

That lady, as soon as she had somewhat recovered from the state of confusion into which Jack's *coup de theatre* had thrown her, became as cloyingly civil to Margaret as ten minutes before she had been openly insolent, and half smothered her 'dear love' Maude with her embraces and congratulations.

Peace being thus restored, Margaret gained courage to suggest that her aunt had better step up and remove her wraps, pending the arrangements for her sleeping there. Jack in the meanwhile had to confess and apologise for the trick he had played on the lovers.

"Well, I suppose, old boy, you won't want to run me through for mating you with your utter detestation, an heiress, will you?"

"Perhaps not," laughed Gerald, "seeing that the heiress is Maude; otherwise——"

"Otherwise you'd hanker after pistols for two and coffee for four—eh? Ah, well, never mind you! I'll survive it, old fellow! As for you, Maude, you have only yourself to thank. Your change of name and our talk under the cedar both set me thinking whether, in some way, I could not find you a man disinterested enough for a husband and interesting enough for a lover, and then I thought of Gerald. Certainly his artistic genius would never save him from starving—it's the truth, my boy, so you need not look as if you would eat me—but he can paint enough to swear by; and I was convinced—forgive me if I was wrong—that you would feel far more interest in Gerald Foulis the struggling artist, than you ever would in Lord Foulis, one of the lot Madge treacherously told me you called uncle Ralph's Philistines. Besides, to confess the whole truth, I had a score to settle with Mrs. Alverton, and I must say the result has exceeded my fondest expectations. However all's well that ends well; so bless you, my children—may you be happy!"

Jack's good wishes were realised. Lord and Lady Foulis were happy themselves and the cause of happiness to all around them. Sir Ralph Alverton was delighted at the match, and used laughingly to shake his head and say his little Maude was far too much of an Alverton to fling herself away on a beggarly artist.

The Melfords never became rich; they were always much too anxious to help others for such an event to happen. But they got along comfortably, and, as every one said—"Who would not help the children of Jack and Margaret Melford?"

JEWEL AND GEM.

THAT old saying which tells us there are 'tricks in all trades,' would appear from recent exposures and explanations to be almost more applicable to Jewellers than to other traders; and if only one half of the misdemeanors with which they are charged be true, they deserve to be placed in the front rank of trade tricksters. There are, however, Jewellers and Jewellers, and although, happily, as a class they are above suspicion, yet, as our courts of justice occasionally reveal, there are also not a few black-sheep in the flock—men who do not scruple to deal in 'doublets' and paste, and who pass off gems and jewels as genuine, that they know to be either altogether false, or to possess some hidden flaw sufficient greatly to lessen their value. Every now and then we find in the newspapers a paragraph or longer article concerning 'mystery gold,' 'forged gems,' or false jewels.'

Recent examples of this kind of news have appeared to the effect that an important discovery had been made regarding the crown of a foreign potentate, as well as the diamond necklace of a lady of rank, many of the gems in the latter article being made of paste; whilst the diadem of the king is announced to be little better than a theatrical bauble, most of the real stones having been extracted and their places filled with imitation ones.

'What is paste?' asked a magistrate, in the course of his examination into a charge of selling imitation stones for real ones. 'Paste, sir,' replied the witness, 'means a mixture of glass and borax;' from which, as we have been informed, the closest imitations of diamonds and other precious stones can be made.

Visitors to Paris who have feasted their eyes on the made-up gems so lavishly displayed in the Jewellers' windows feel surprised when they are told that four-fifths of the glittering baubles are composed of paste, and are of little value as compared with real gems.

It used to be said that most of the jewelry shown in the Palais-Royal was manufactured for use of the stage; but the actresses of to-day, unless obliged to wear paste, will, when they can afford it, adorn their persons with none but real gems.

The names of several artists might easily be given who are reputed to be possessed rich in diamonds and rubies, and who are possessed besides of pearls of great price. Some actresses, indeed, seem to draw attendances nowaday as much by the aid of their jewels as their talents.

When a female star visits the provinces, pains are frequently taken to proclaim the number and value of her gems and jewels. Who, then, wears the paste diamonds and other imitation gems which are manufactured? To this question, an answer of rather a startling kind has more than once been given, and one of the latest may here be noted.

A gentleman who was deeply involved and requiring a considerable sum of money to pay his debts of honor, stole his wife's jewels in order to pawn them. To his consternation, the pawnbroker refused to look at them. "Why?" was severally asked. "Because they are paste."—"Paste! My wife's jewels paste?"—"Yes. I supplied her with them. The originals are in my safe; I advanced £8000 upon them."

Unfortunately, the gentleman's wife was as great a gambler as her husband, and she had been obliged to pawn her diamonds to meet her own liabilities.

The ingenuity of persons who "get up" precious stones and mock-pearls for "the trade" has been often commented upon and frequently censured.

A lapidary who works in the groove indicated was called upon, a few months ago, in a court of law to explain his mode of procedure. "I make all my imitations out of real stones," was the reply to the judge. On being asked to be more explicit, he said: "Perhaps I possess some pale stones which are of small value: these I split by the aid of my tools, then introducing a deeper tone of color, I join them together again, having considerably increased their saleable value." In this manner the colors of many stones are said to be intensified, such as emerald, sapphires, amethysts, and others.

Diamonds are constantly utilised by being split, each half of a gem perhaps doing duty on a paste foundation on which it has been carefully mounted. A stone which may be of the value of £50 having been split at little cost, is carefully mounted, and becomes transformed into two gems, each affirmed to be worth that sum.

It requires a clever expert to detect such frauds when they are cleverly executed, or to discover that the "fire imparted to certain stones that would otherwise be dull of hue and greatly deficient in sparkle, is conferred by so simple an expedient as a backing of tinfoil. This invention of what are called "doublets" in diamond-dealing can be traced back for centuries.

One mode of getting up false stones has been described by Jerome Cardan, who has published in detail the method of the inventor, one Zoolino. This person's way of working was to procure a thin flake of a very inferior and cheap example of the stone he desired to "improve," choosing those which had little color, and might in consequence be procured at a nominal price.

As a bottom for his "make-up" he took a bit of crystal which he had shaped to his purpose; covering this with a transparent glue with which he had mixed the necessary coloring material, so as to be like the finest specimen of the gem he intended to forge, he carefully fixed on the flake of stone, and concealed the joining of the two so deftly by careful setting as to make purchasers fancy that his gems were not only genuine, but really finer than those of other jewellers. For a time Zoolino flourished, and was enabled by means of his cunning workmanship to deceive the cleverest lapidaries; but detection came at last, and put an end to his fraudulent practices in gem-making.

It may be mentioned that the Singhalese at Colombo are experts in such frauds, and frequently persuade persons to purchase cleverly set up doublets, or pieces of rock-crystal cut and polished.

Doublets in many cases, especially when both parts are really diamonds, are somewhat difficult to detect even by men who have had great experience in the gem and jewel trade.

Before leaving the diamond, we may mention another kind of fraud connected with it. Often, when these gems have been set in a cluster, it has been found on examination that at least one of the stones is made of paste, or is perhaps a doublet.

A rather curious story went the round of the press some years ago, when, on the death of a lady of title, it was found that more than one-third of the family diamonds were composed of false stones. These imitations had been so beautifully executed that none but the cleverest dealers were able to detect them.

Many gems are really gems of a kind, although not the gems they are pretended to be, but in all probability are composed of pieces "got up" for the market, quartz being selected as most probably being able to stand the test of the file, which glass cannot do.

There are varieties of topaz and other stones which are as hard as the diamond; and being entirely colorless, they are often cut and polished and successfully palmed off as diamonds.

This colorless gem material is costly in consequence of the use to which it can be easily turned. Recipes for the production of imitation stones have been often given. The following is the formula for a ruby: five hundred parts of strass, twenty of glass of antimony, a half each of purple of Cassius and of gold.

Strass is manufactured for a kind of glass which has been long used in connection with the fabrication of gems; it usually contains a much larger percentage of oxide of lead than the commoner sort of glass. Aventurine is another kind of gem glass, which is chiefly manufactured in Venice, and brings a high price.

The best thing is a quartz of varying shades of color, which is much prized. One of the scarcer varieties is known as sunstone, and is much sought after, being valuable for such purposes as have been referred to.

Attempts by chemists to produce diamonds have, commercially speaking, usually resulted in failure. The most successful of the early experiments tried in the way of diamond production was that worked out by a Frenchman, who in the year 1828 succeeding in producing a substance that was affirmed by a practical jeweler of great repute to be a diamond; but after much controversy, the opinion came to be ultimately entertained that he had failed.

"Mock-pearls" are the subject of frequent discussion. The wonderful lustre and exquisite polish of the real gem of the sea have been more than once imitated with almost the power of nature.

But there is a something about this beautiful and mysterious production which in the end tells against all attempts at fraud. The imitation when tested with the real gem provides one source of detection, and the brittle nature of the manufactured article is another.

Another matter is that the exquisitely drilled holes which are characteristic of the pearls of the East are wanting in all imitations, the drilling in the latter case being usually clumsy and blunt-edged.

The scales of a small fish known as the bleak, have been successfully used in the formation of these pearls; but as it requires some eighteen thousand of those fishes to provide one pound-weight of the pearl-making material, it seems superfluous to say that only a very limited number of these gems can be made from the scales of the bleak.

Here we pause, not having space left in which to discuss the "manufacture" of cameos, or the production of that "mystery gold" which two years ago afforded so much material for newspaper discussion. At the present time, when pictures and pottery, old furniture, articles of virtu of all kinds, coins, and even birds' eggs, are forged, it is not a matter for surprise that spurious diamonds, mock-pearls, and imitations of many of our more precious gems should be foisted on the public by unscrupulous tradespeople.

Nevertheless, so long as a lady can purchase for a few dollars a necklace or other adornment which, if genuine, would have cost hundreds or perhaps thousands, the imitation gem trade will continue to flourish.

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

The American Ornithological Union is making a vigorous effort to put a stop to the wanton slaughter of song-birds in this country. Resolutions were passed at the late meeting at New York and arranged in a law, which is to be presented to the different State Legislatures for action, forbidding the killing of wild birds except English sparrows and game birds. The law is framed on that recently passed by the New York Legislature.

Last year Thanksgiving came on a Thursday, November 25th, for every State in the Union, by proclamation of the President. Previous to the late civil strife by which the geographical limits of freedom were greatly enlarged, each State had its Thanksgiving Day by proclamation of the various Governors, some of the States ignoring the custom altogether. The dark years of 1861-5 changed the custom, and it has since been a national holiday. It is now one of the evidences that we are a nation and not merely a federation of "Sovereign" States.

When railroads open proper communication, the salt mines of Nevada will yield one of the most valuable products of the State. In Lincoln county there is a pure rock-salt deposit exposed to view for two miles. In some places it is over one half mile wide, and is of great depth. In one place, where it is cut by the canon of the Rio Virgin, it is sixty feet deep. This deposit is supposed to extend along under the surface for fully nine miles. It is so hard that, to be worked, it must be blasted, and it is so clear that blocks one foot thick are perfectly transparent.

They still study a bit in Germany. In that empire there are now twenty Universities, with a little over 28,000 students. The largest is Berlin, with 4,434 students: Leipsic, 3,069; Munich, 3,055; Halle, 1,518; Breslau, 1,425; Tubingen, 1,403; Wurtzburg, 1,369; Bonn, 1,263; Gottingen, 1,076; Freiburg, 1,318; Heidelberg (which celebrated this year its 500th anniversary), 1,036. The remaining nine Universities are Greifswalde, Marburg, Erlangen, Konigsberg, Strasburg, Jena, Kiel, Giessen, and Rostock with numbers from 1,018 to 3.4. Erlangen has 309; Jena, 650; Kiel, 543.

Thirty-four years ago Livingston was the first white man to cross Africa. It was in this famous trip from Loanda to the Indian Ocean that he revealed the upper Zambesi valley to the world and discovered the great Victoria Falls. Ten years ago Cameron crossed the continent from Zanzibar to Benguela, thwarted in his ambition to follow the Congo to the sea by his inability to procure canoes. Stanley a little later solved the Congo problem. Wissman, five years ago, was the first to cross the continent from west to east, traversing much new territory and discovering a new central African [illegible] who was able to honor his visitor by opening a bottle of champagne from Paris. About the same time Matteucci and Massari followed a route that was supposed to be impracticable, travelling from the Red Sea through the fierce Mohammedan States south of the Sahara and attaining the mouth of the Niger in safety, though so fever-worn that Matteucci died the very week he reached London. Capello and Ivens, in their great journey two years ago from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean, explored the sources of the Congo. The most recent German traveller, Giesrup, completes the list of travellers who have crossed the continent within the tropics.

The jewel-house in the Tower of London contains the crown jewels, inclosed in an immense glass case, where they are on exhibition to visitors. They do not include many gems of ancient date, as the royal regalia was sold during the time of the Commonwealth. On the accession of Charles II., a new crown was made, but only a few of the old gems could be purchased for it. This crown forms a part of the collection of crown jewels, also the crown made for the Queen of James II., and her ivory sceptre; the crown made for George IV., Prince of Wales, and that of the late Prince Consort; also the crown made for the coronation of Queen Victoria, which contains gems valued at $500,000. The most remarkable stone in the diamond collection in the Koh-i-noor, or mountain of light, a stone which once belonged to Runjeet Singh, the ruler of Lahore, India. It weighed before cutting 186 karats. Another remarkable stone is a ruby diamond that was worn by the Black Prince. Besides there are numbers of other precious stones, also articles of gold and silver studded with gems, the royal spurs, swords, bracelets, etc., and the basin in which all the royal infants are christened, and the spoons and cups with which they are fed. These are all included in what are understood as the "crown jewels."

FALSE TEETH.—You cannot destroy a false set of teeth in the retort of a crematory. This is one victory of art over nature. Our own teeth we can reduce to ashes with the rest of the body, but false teeth and gold plate hold their own. Silver plates or any other substances used by dentists will disappear, but four thousand degrees of heat have been turned on artificial teeth without destroying them, and the gold rivets in the teeth, after that heat has been applied, will also be found intact.

Our Young Folks.

"HALF A MINUTE MORE!"

BY L. F. ELSON.

"WHERE did you get this picture, Jack, and whose portrait is it?" inquired little Elsie of her counterpart friend.

"I picked that up in a book-shop, many years ago," returned the honest tar, "for I thought it had a strong look of Robin, my little brother."

"What, had you a brother too?" inquired Elsie. "I never knew that before. Tell us about him—do?"

Whilst Freddy chimed in with a "Yes, spin us a yarn, Jack."

Thus beset, and smiling down upon the two eager faces, Jack established himself upon his chest, and holding the print in his hand, ransacked from his memory the following incident:

"When I was young" (Jack's stories generally opened in this manner) "I had, like many another lad, a craving after the briny; and in spite of poor mother's remonstrances I went into the merchant service. A pretty hard time I had of it, I can tell you, Master Fred, and I knocked about for many a long year from ship to ship, and from port to port.

"I was sixteen or more before I found myself in my native village again, near Falmouth, my father dead long since, and my mother very ill. She was overjoyed to see me again, poor soul, and on her death-bed committed to my charge my little brother Robin, as pretty a little fellow, with curly hair and blue eyes, as ever you saw.

"Some months went by, but my coin ran short, and at last I had to go to sea again, leaving little Robin in charge of a respectable old body as had known mother well. He was to go to school, for he was a smart little lad, with more learning in his little finger than I in my great hulking head. But the wrench of parting was very hard. I was glad enough to get off at last, and turned in dead beat into my hammock the first night aboard, glad it was all over, and the little lad in safe hands.

"I was awake at last by something moving on my bed. At first I thought it was one of those impudent rats, of which there are shoals on board some of those wooden vessels.

"I put out my hand and was astounded to feel a little soft hand thrust into mine, while a voice whispered, 'It's only me—Robin,' and, sure enough, so it was! Robin, who had run away from Mrs. Yarrow's, had stripped on board and been hiding away the whole of the day whilst we were getting down Channel!

"Here was a pretty 'kettle o' fish!" and though I scolded him well he only clung to me the more and cried, while I turned over in my mind how best to get him ashore again, and what the captain would say the next morning. But the captain was a soft-hearted man as ever trod a deck, and his wife, who was aboard, when she saw Robin, cried out, 'Why, he's the very double of our Charlie! we must keep him.' So that clinched matters, and Robin stayed aboard.

"Robin took to sea-life very kindly. He became a prime favorite with all; the roughest had a soft word for him, and stopped their horse-play and evil conversation when the little innocent lad was present among them.

"We were sailing around one of the West Indian islands one evening, and I was looking across the deck, when in the stillness I heard a sudden plunge in the waters, and the well known cry, 'Man overboard!' Leaning over the side I saw a dark speck struggling in the distance.

"Without more ado I kicked off my shoes, took a header, and made straight for the object, which, to my horror, I found to be the captain's wife. She was crazy with fright, poor soul, and clung to me with all the despair of a drowning creature. It was a comparatively easy matter for a good swimmer to keep afloat till help came, and I felt no alarm, more especially when a boat was shoved off from the ship to meet us.

"But when about half way towards the boat a cry arouse which curdled the very blood in my veins. 'A shark! a shark!' they called out, and the rowers redoubled their efforts. Sure enough one of those monsters of the deep which infest the shores of the West Indies was on our track. I strained every nerve, my limbs felt all of a sudden as if weighted with lead. I knew instinctively the fiend was gaining on us, and, burdened as I was, expected a horrible death every minute for both of us. Only a few strokes and we should be in safety; but how far off the boat seemed to my strained limbs. All this passed through my mind, and I saw as in a vision little Robin's white face at the bow urging me on, whilst the voice of one of my mates came distinctly across the water, sealing our fate. 'He'll never do it—never!'

"The words were hardly out of his mouth when Robin rose from his seat, with arms upraised, took a tremendous 'header' into the sea, and began to make for us. He passed me, but the monster, keen in pursuit, crossed him unheeded. Robin, who swam like a duck, dived beneath the shark, inflicting a great wound with his knife on the fleshy part of the huge body, and bobbed up like a cork some distance off. The savage creature turned suddenly on his new victim, leaving a red streak on the green waters, and Robin, taking advantage of his start, struck out gallantly towards the ship.

"I and my burden were soon lugged on board, and all eyes were fixed on the flaxen head in the distance. They held me back by main force from jumping into the water. 'It's of no good, mate,' they said; 'they are too far off.' I was then obliged in spite of myself to become a witness of the awful race for life. Robin strained every limb, and I fancied the enemy showed signs of weakness from loss of blood. But Robin's strength also began to give in at last, his strokes were shorter, he made less way, and the monster seemed to find it out, and to redouble his efforts, lashing the sea with his powerful tail. I felt as if I could not stand the cruel suspense another minute, when about a cable's length from the ship I saw the little lad make a spurt, and he managed to grasp one of the ropes that were flung out for his rescue. They immediately began to haul up, and I breathed afresh as I saw him suspended in mid-air, whilst a burst of cheering rang across the water!

"Baulked of his victim, the shark made a dive, then jumped high out of the water. A cry pierced the air—a mist came before my eyes. Presently a voice said close to me—

"'Cheer up, man—don't take on so; the boy's hurt, but he ain't done for yet.'

"I can scarcely remember now what more happened till I found myself standing by the hammock where Robin lay.

"'Weren't you afraid, Robin, lad?' I asked.

"'Afraid, Jack, when it was to help you!' he said reproachfully; 'but I was afraid, for I thought the shark would take no notice of me—I was *such a little bit of a chap!*'

"Those were anxious days that followed, for the shark had just caught him in the heel, and fever set in; and it was not till we were in mid-ocean again that the sea-breezes seemed to revive the lad. It was a glad day when little Robin was first carried up on deck; the crew seemed as if they could not make enough of him, and as for the captain's wife, she looked upon him more as her own boy than ever."

"Is that all?" said Elsie, as Jack paused at last; whilst Freddy asked, "What became of Robin afterwards?"

"Robin never went no more to sea," said Jack; "his accident left him a bit lame for months afterwards. When we got back home folks had heard his story—it got into the newspapers somehow—and they made so end of the plucky little lad, and sent him to school, for, as I said before, he was a rare scholar. He's a grown man now, and master of the grammar school at Northbury, with a little Robin of his own who's almost as fond of old Jack's yarns as you are yourself, young sir."

"And is Robin as fond of you as ever, Jack?" inquired Elsie anxiously.

"Just the same as ever," returned Jack. "So is his wife; and they are always wanting me to live with them for good and all. I tried it once, but somehow after a bit that living inland seems to choke me like, and I was obliged to come back to the old place again. Don't seem as if I could live out of sight and sound of the briny," said Jack, sniffing the breeze, and casting a loving look out across the broad waters, from which the mist was rising, and leaving a slender streak of silver light along the horizon.

THE CAPTIVE MACAWS.

BY J. STODDARD.

"CHAINED!" The macaws had said this every day for some months. The porch was handsome, and so was the room in which it was placed.

And the conservatory in which they passed their time was full of rare plants and beautiful flowers. Their mistress gave them everything that she thought would please them, for not understanding bird language, she did not know that they deplored their captivity.

"Chained!" said Blanco, the white macaw, and Verdea the green one echoed, "Chained!"

THE ORANGE TREES.

There were several orange trees in green tubs in the conservatory, and Blanco and Verdea liked to watch the fruit ripen, as it reminded them of their home, where fruit grew in abundance.

When they were let loose in the conservatory the two birds immediately flew to the orange trees and hid themselves among the glossy leaves; they closed their eyes and dreamed of their sunny land and the deep blue sky that used to seem so far above them.

To-day they clung to the branches of the largest one, and there bemoaned the loss of their freedom.

"A prison is a prison, however magnificent it may be," said Blanco. "Here are beautiful plants and flowers, and the air is warm, but one can only see the sun through the glass walls."

"And sometimes not that," replied Verdea, "especially when the gardener had been watering for them it becomes quite misty. Oh, for Brazil once more!"

"Brazil, Brazil," cried another voice that startled the macaws, and caused them to open their eyes and gaze around. The voice went on—

"Brazil, Brazil, were you there still,
Of trouble you would have your fill."

"Why, what has happened? Who are you? Where are you? What, why, who?"

The macaws darted from the orange trees and looked up and down and round, but they saw no one. They gazed at one another; they were bewildered.

"A voice from our native land," said Blanco.

"We cannot be mistaken," said Verdea.

THE LORY.

No, they were not mistaken, for high up among the palm branches, sat a brilliant-looking lory; it had escaped from its cage and found its way to the conservatory, and when it saw the bewildered glances of the two macaws it flew down, laughing heartily.

"So the macaws in America are no better off than the macaws in Brazil?"

"Have you come from our country? Tell us, oh, tell us about it!" said the macaws, clasping their claws.

"Don't be tragic," said the lory, "and I'll tell you the story.

"I count that I am a most fortunate lory
To be safe away in such quarters as these,
Away from the troubles and dangers abounding
Around the great tree, the cocoa tree."

"Dangers!" ejaculated the two macaws, "dangers in our own beautiful country! We were safe there; quite out of the reach of domestic cats."

"Pooh!" said the lory contemptuously, "you would most likely have your heads cut off, as I suppose you consider that you belong to the royal family."

"We do," said Blanco and Verdea very proudly.

"Then you are better off where you are. There's been a revolution, the parrots have rebelled and got the upper hand, and King Macaw has taken flight."

Blanco and Verdea listened breathlessly, and the lory went on.

"I saw the king, perched on the bough of one of our majestic trees address his loyal generals on the day before the battle. He was despondent, but said—

"'We must do our best and fight bravely, and though superior forces are against us, bravery may conquer.'"

"Ah!" said Blanco. "I've no doubt of it."

"But bravery didn't conquer," continued the lory; "it was numbers did it; the parrots poured in from nearly every quarter, and numbers won the day."

"Oh!" said Blanco.

"And having seen the battle," said the lory, "and seeing what a dreadful thing war is, and that the less one has to do with it the better, I made my way to the seacoast and allowed myself to be captured by a sailor, who brought me over to America, and taught me to speak English on the way. I can sing 'Yankee-Doodle' like a Yankee. Should you like to hear it?"

"Ignoble!" murmured Verdea.

"I spoke and sang so well, that I fetched twenty-five dollars at a sale."

"Alas!" exclaimed Blanco.

"Degenerate!" said Verdea.

"Nonsense!" said the lory; "I'm in good quarters. I feel like a retired general; everything is provided for me, and I have no further trouble."

"But you belonged to the parrot faction," said Blanco; "you would have been safe enough."

"As long as the parrots were in power; but what if a change came, and come it will, for this is the beginning of a war? It will be see-saw, see-saw—first up, then down; and as I am a peace-bird, I felt the best way was to get off as soon as I could."

Again Verdea murmured—

"Ignoble!"

This time the lory heard her, and he shrugged.

Blanco, who had been silent for a time, asked—

"Was the fighting so very dreadful?"

"Dreadful! Claws, beaks, feathers, legs, wings, tails, heads, shrieks, screams, hisses, groans, moans, whirr, whirl, rush, cloud, darkness, wild confusion, smash, crash, smash, crash—I never wish to see such a sight again."

Again Blanco was silent, then he glanced around.

He looked thoughtful for a moment.

"This conservatory is not a bad place," said he.

"I should think not. I've been enjoying myself up at the top. Let us take a flight there."

"There is a palm—there is a feathery palm," said Verdea, gazing upwards.

"Of course there is. I've been up among its leaves. There is also a plantain tree, and a young cork tree, and lots of friendly trees," said the lory. "I am quite surprised you have not made their acquaintance. As for the flowers—but certainly you have seen these, as they are not so high up?"

"Never," murmured Blanco. "We hid ourselves among the orange trees, and dreamed of home."

"What stupid birds!" said the lory to himself.

Blanco shook out his wings and spread them, saying to Verdea—

"Let us go."

"And they set off. Such a rustling of wings had not been heard in the conservatory before, for the macaws, as they truly said, had never been higher than the orange trees.

Now they flew round and round with the lory, even Verdea felt unspirited, though she still murmured "Captivity."

The lory considered for a moment.

"Let us view it in another light," said he. "We are rulers, man is our slave. Our mistress and her servants wait upon us, provide us with food, see to everything for us, grow tropical plants for us, make gilt wire chambers for our safety when we sleep, and are always thinking of our comfort, whilst we have no cares and no anxieties, but reign supreme."

Blanco and Verdea could not help smiling at this novel idea.

"It is best to make the best of everything," said the lory.

"I suppose it is," answered Blanco, "so since you have brought us such a bad account of our country, and say that it is impossible to live there, you must help us to make captivity as pleasant as possible."

THE RELIGION OF INDIA.—It has been about fourteen years since the Buddhistic movement was inaugurated in New York, and in that time there has been a steady increase in the ranks of investigators. None but an investigator can have any idea of the literature that has grown up to answer the demand for this study.

There are books translated from the Sanskrit, many Hindu works, and not a few English books relating to this subject. Within a year ten or twelve new publications have been issued in New York and Boston.

The Bhagavad-Gita, the Bible of the Buddhists, is sold in this country in a dozen different editions, and there are homes in the two cities of Brooklyn and New York where its sacred precepts and its teachings scrupulously followed.

The rules of the order require several things. One is a constant practice of charity which must be of the kind that prevents evil thoughts to and one's self or one's neighbor, to be one is a vegetarian diet and absolute temperance. There are others and formidable, and, in fact, the further one goes in the study the more difficult of performance are the regulations.

The Buddhists insist that their religion is universal in its application, and meets the wants of all mankind, and that ultimately all races will learn the truth through a knowledge of it. Meantime every Buddhist works for the salvation of the world by directing his efforts towards his own spiritual growth, and by treating his neighbor as a brother.

What is understood by this last expression is that all men are to receive courteous treatment and real justice at the hands of a Buddhist, but nothing more. There must be a separateness of duty and effort as the dictates, and no man must assume another's duty. There is danger in everything that pertains to the doing of another's duty, and this is clearly illustrated by Buddha.

That some of the followers of this famous and ancient religion have powers of a psychic nature, unknown to people generally, is established. English army officers who have returned home from the East and written books about the wonderful powers of the Buddhist fakirs and strolling magicians, have all united in declaring that they have only told what they saw every day in the way of phenomena, and have emphasized their statements that no priests and high initiates could perform with their wills or souls, or some interior force, marvels unheard of, and never to be believed in the West.

Those among the Buddhists in this country who have been in India have had similar experiences. They all claim that the spiritual force they learn is not of an emotional nature, has nothing whatever to do with sentiment, and is superior to all who teach it; in other words, that a man can get a knowledge of his self independent of any one, and secure salvation without the mediation of any other than himself.

IN A MOORISH CITY.—The streets of Tangier, in Africa—if the idea of a street can be conveyed by narrow, unpaved or ill-paved, uneven pathways—wind between whitewashed walls, windowless, and not often more than fifteen or twenty feet high. There are arched doorways, through which, when open, you can see into the patio or court, off which the rooms give; these glimpses into the patios, even of the poorest houses, are very pretty; the paints they use to redden the floors and blue the basements of the whitewashed walls are mixed with water and constantly being applied, so that the colors are very bright, and so is the sunlight; there is often a fig tree or a vine in the middle of the patio, and the shadows of the broad leaves lie like stains of purple on the red, sunlit floor.

Here and there in these uncommercial little streets, there is a recess in the wall five or six feet square and about three feet above the roadway; here, protected from the sun or weather by a rude wooden awning, sits, cross-legged, a grocer, let us call him, flipping the flies away from his merchandise, which consists of black olives, dates, soft-soap, white butter, indented with many finger marks, sugar, tea, coffee, etc.

The main street runs up from the marine, past the principal mosque, with its green-tiled tower, through the Soko, or market place, out of the gates of the city to the great Soko, where the country people come and sell their produce.

The main streets has many little shops such as I have described; those near the mosque and the Cadi's court are the offices of Adulis, or notaries, who sit cross-legged on their mats, with their paper on their knees, and compliete simple matters in beautiful Arabic characters, with an ingenuity worthy of a larger sphere of action, while their clients sit on the edge of their doorway, a prey to the strife which rages between the warmth of a litigant and the reticence of a Moor, man.

Then there are little shops where aquat serious turbaned vendors of babouches, or slippers—yellow for the men, crimson for the women—and belts and broideries, and such things as go to make up the few picturesque wants of Moorish life.

THE city of Baltimore recently passed an ordinance prohibiting swinging signs, and the first which was taken down under the new law was that of the city solicitor. This was laying the axe to the root of the tree.

PARTED.

BY D. J. B.

Once more my hand will clasp your hand;
  Your loved voice I shall hear once more;
But we shall never see the land,
  The pleasant land, we knew of yore;
Never, on any summer day,
  Hear the low music of its streams,
Or wander down the leafy way
  That leadeth to the land of dreams.

Still, borne upon the scented air,
  The songs of birds are clear and sweet,
As when I gathered roses there,
  And heaped their glories at your feet;
And still the golden pathway lies
  At eve across the western sea,
And lovers dream beneath those skies,
  Which shine no more for you and me.

No more, ah, nevermore! and yet
  They seem so near, those summer days,
When Hope was like a jewel set
  To shine adown Time's misty ways;
I sometimes dream that morning's light
  Will bring them back to us once more,
And that 'tis but one long dark night
  Since we two parted by the shore.

We parted with soft words and low,
  And "Farewell till to-morrow," said;
From sea and sky, the sunset's glow
  A golden halo round you shed;
Then as you went, I heard you sing,
  "Haste thee, sweet morrow!" parting thus
How could we dream that life would bring
  Not any morrow there for us?

We parted, and that last farewell
  Its shadow on our life-path cast;
And Time's relentless barriers fell
  Between us and our happy past;
And now we meet when cares and tears
  Have dulled the parting and the pain,
But never can the weary years
  Bring back our golden dreams again.

ABOUT CHINA, NEW AND OLD.

The subject of the pottery, china and wares of all sorts is a wide subject, and one upon which, the last few years, much has been said. China has been very near to the hearts of the upper classes: and a good many gentlemen and most ladies of fashion know the distinctive marks of the principal makers of modern porcelain, and can tell at a glance the birthplace of each cup or saucer that hangs upon their neighbor's walls.

The earliest historic notion of pottery we possess is in the Biblical description of the Tower of Babel. From the Bible, too, we learn that the Egyptians were among the first to make extensive use of the art of pottery. From them it spread—constantly improving and perfecting itself—to Babylonia, Phoenecia, Greece, Persia, China and Japan—in fact, to all the then civilized quarters of the globe. The Arabs were of much use in diffusing the knowledge of ancient ceramic art, for they, when they conquered Persia, found the young plant flourishing and during a long series of restless campaigns, scattered its seeds far and wide. One of the first and most curious uses to which the ancient Egyptians applied their knowledge of pottery was the making of inlaid cases in which to conceal their mummies.

An idea which may possibly have sprung from this custom is to be seen in old Brazilian pottery. There the dried corpses of chiefs have occasionally been found, dressed in full war costume, placed in sitting posture in a large vase.

This old American pottery, Peruvian and Brazilian, is remarkably curious and interesting, partly, perhaps from the fact that its age is so very uncertain. Some of the many pieces found date from the time of the Incas; but others seem to belong to far remoter times. There was no lack of skill, however, amongst these antique manufacturers, and many of the artists who planned the designs appear to have possessed not only delicacy of touch, but a strong sense of humor. Some of the Peruvian water-bottles are called "whistling jugs," owing to a curious contrivance by which they are made to emit a sound not unlike that of a bird. On these jugs the handle runs from the spout on one side to a similar projection on the other, on which is the head of a bird or animal. In the head is a small hole, through which the air rushes as the jar is emptied or filled, thus causing the whistling noise.

Double jugs, or two jugs united by a common spout or handle, are common relics of American ware, one of the most striking of these representing the cleverly-delineated forms of two animals, intended for stag and doe. The Peruvians, also, like many other primitive nations, were in the habit of placing various pieces of pottery in the graves of their dead. With every Inca were interred his cooking utensils, some of silver, some of gold, and more of ware.

In Germany have been discovered some sepulchral urns fashioned of pottery. These, unearthed from time to time, prove that the ancient Teutons were in the habit of preserving the remains of their more illustrious compatriots in a peculiar manner. The urns were made in the form of small huts or dwelling houses of ware, into which the ashes of the dead were introduced by means of a hole in the roof.

One of the most distinguished characteristics of old Roman pottery was the enormous size of many of their vessels. Some of the amphorae, or water-bottles, were, we are told, so large and heavy that two oxen were required to draw them. The dish made to hold the leviathan turbot of historic celebrity once presented to the Emperor Domitian is calculated to have been more than seven feet long; whilst from another Roman author we hear of a celebrated vase so big that it required a ladder of twelve steps to enable a man to reach its mouth!

The ancient Greeks, as we all know, brought ceramic art to a high degree of perfection, but some of the uses to which they applied their pottery strike our modern minds as eminently peculiar. We are apt to consider Diogenes as a very eccentric individual, and his choice of a habitation as unique; but his conduct probably appeared by no means in an extraordinary light to his neighbors. The "tub" (i. e., pithos, or cask) of Diogenes was a large earthenware or terra-cotta jar, a style of domicile not unknown to the Greeks.

These large casks, originally made to contain wine, were in use long after the time of Diogenes as dwelling-places for the very poor; and we are informed that during the Peloponnesian War the Athenians frequently took up their abode in similar vessels. This strange habit was, indeed, not confined to the early Greeks. It is more than probable that it was shared by the ancient Romans, if not by other nations, for several gigantic pithos have been unearthed in Italy, whilst others, of pale red ware, four feet four inches in height and two feet two inches in diameter, were found not many years ago by a Colonel Munroe during some excavations made near Sebastopol.

Another whimsical fancy of the Greeks was the making of terra-cotta dolls or marionettes. Many of these have been found in old Athenian sepulchres, where their presence denotes some curious superstition. Their ordinary destination, was simply for show. They were cast in a mould, the bodies and limbs being of separate pieces, pierced with holes, by means of which each part could be made to move at will on the pulling of a string. The marionette exhibitions were by no means despised by the refined and cultured Greeks. Xenophon, in one of his plays, makes mention of them.

Grains of Gold.

Life is half spent before we know what it is.

The longest life is but a parcel of moments.

There can be no high civility without a deep morality.

Beware of one who sickens with envy of another's good.

There is nothing so sweet as a duty and all the best pleasures of life come in the wake of duties done.

The experience of each year of our lives ought to enable us to spend every succeeding one better than the last.

If a man has a clear idea of what he desires to do, he will seldom fail in selecting the proper means of accomplishing it.

The only way to go through this world and avoid censure is to take some back road. You cannot travel the main road and do it.

Be cheerful, and seek no external help, nor the tranquility which others give. A man must stand erect, not be kept erect by others.

The understanding is better employed in bearing the misfortunes that actually befall us than in penetrating into those that possibly may.

The plain and wholesome things of life are its greatest blessings. We are taught to pray not for luxuries or dainties, but for daily bread.

Once let a man insult the majesty of duty by waiting until its commands shall become easy, and he must be disowned as an outlaw from her realm.

We get gradually accustomed to mental as well as bodily pain, losing our insensibility to it: it becomes a habit of our lives, and we cease to imagine a condition of perfect ease as possible to us.

Femininities.

Beautiful thoughts are the flowers of the mind.

Man was created first. Woman was a sort of recreation.

Envy is destroyed by true friendship, as coquetry is by true love.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning wrote her first poem when she was 11 years of age.

A cyclone is like three school-girls walking abreast. It doesn't turn out for anything.

There is in Massachusetts 65,000 more women than men. This is why the women have to stand in the street-cars.

Mrs. Cleveland promises to favor the reform movement which asks ladies to remove their hats on entering a theatre.

Fruit or rust stains on table linen or other white cloths may be removed by soaking in a weak solution of oxalic acid.

It is a mournful commentary on human vanity to see the mourners looking back, on turning a corner, to see if the procession is worthy of the corpse.

The School of Philosophy has not yet determined how a woman should act when her hands are in the dough-pan and an aggressive fly lights on her nose.

Impecunious lover: "Be mine, Amanda, and you will be treated like an angel." Wealthy maiden: "Yes, I suppose so: nothing to eat and less to wear; no, I thank you."

A golden rule for a young lady is to converse always with your female friends as if a gentleman were of the party, and with young men as if your female companions were present.

Pins for the hair are in endless variety—bugs, flies, stars, dog's heads, oxydized designs, gold coils, twisted knots of cords, all to be thrown at Hottun anywhere they can find a hold.

Emma—"Reggy, darling, when we are married you will not smoke in the house, will you?" Reggy—"No, love; the fellows will expect me at the club, you know." Still, Emma is not happy.

Mrs. Florence Boulanger, who lives on the north shore of the St. Lawrence river, has beaten the record. Two years ago she bore twins, last year triplets, and now she has given birth to a full quartet.

They were talking about second marriages, when a young woman was moved to enunciate this aphorism: "She who marries a second husband does not deserve to have the good fortune to lose the first."

Annabella is not Anna bella, or fair Anna, but is the feminine for Hannibal, meaning gift (or grace) of Bel (one of the heathen gods). Arabella is not Ara bella, or beautiful altar, but Orabilla, a praying woman.

A Lewiston, Me., spinster, the possessor of three cats, is writing a book on "How to Manage a Husband." She probably commences it as Mrs. Glass did her famous recipe, "How to Cook a Hare"—"First catch your hare."

"Now, Jamie, you musn't stay at the Jewett's until you wear your welcome out," said a fond mother. "I know when to come home," replied the youth. "You don't catch me staying after they begin to talk slow."

Gail Hamilton has written a long article to prove that the young woman of the period is frail, frivolous, foolish and fantastic. So she is, Gail, so she is; and we men are just frail, frivolous, foolish and fantastic enough to admire her.

Mrs. A. Hatch, of Clackamas county, Oregon, writes to say that the weather there is as warm and bright as a spring day; flowers are in bloom and the grass is as fresh and green as if it was April instead of the end of December.

Mrs. George Sage, of Harlan, Ia., is reported to have traveled 14,000 miles in search of her husband, who last fall ran off with his hired girl. She doesn't care particularly for the man, but she has nothing else to do and is fond of travel.

An exchange asks what would become of the homes of America if the soothing effects of the dear old fire-side songs were not there. There is a strong belief that they would be such abodes of peace that the young men couldn't be driven from them.

In 1853, during the Tea-Ping rebellion in China, half a million of women formed in brigades of 13,000, under female officers, and took an active part in the war. Ten thousand from each brigade fought and the others did the drudgery of camp life.

Queen Victoria rings the feudal bell in the ears of her youngest son-in-law, Prince Henry, of Battenberg. Prince Henry is not allowed to "sleep out," and whenever he happens to be in London o' nights he must catch the last train for Windsor.

A trifle saved from daily expenses can now and then put a new book upon the table or shelf. The expenditure of a few cents can convert the plain window into a conservatory. In these and fifty other ways can a plain, bare room be converted into a scene of beauty.

A bad breath may be cured as follows, no matter what the cause: Three hours after breakfast a teaspoonful of the following mixture: Chlorate of potash, two drams; sweetened water, four ounces; wash the mouth occasionally with the mixture and the breath will be as sweet as an infant's.

Last Christmas Eve, Mrs. Blank went upstairs to see if the children had hung up their stockings for Santa Claus, and found that little Jim had pinned his up to a prominent place, with a slip of paper attached containing the suggestive New Testament sentence: "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver."

Fashionable young woman, to dealer: "I want to look at a cane that would be suitable for a birthday gift." Dealer: "For a young or old gentleman, ma'am?" Fashionable young woman: "Oh, quite young." Dealer: "Do you know what size hat he wears?" Fashionable young woman: "Five and a half, I think." Dealer: "I see. The largest size will please him best. The smaller the hat, ma'am, the larger the cane."

Masculinities.

A thousand probabilities do not make one truth.

Bad men excuse their faults; good men will leave them.

Meyerbeer, the composer, could whistle "Yankee Doodle" at 3 years of age.

One dollar has been voted by the Albany Council with which to buy a picture of the late S. J. Tilden.

There is no particular harm in riding a hobby if you don't take up the whole road while riding it.

When a man offers you a business worth a million a year for $100 take it. The experience will benefit you.

Everywhere and always a man's worth must be gauged to some extent, though only in part, by his domesticity.

The young man who can't raise enough money to pay for a marriage license now puts up $1 an hour for a sleigh.

He who is passionate and hasty is generally honest. It is your old dissembling hypocrite of whom you should beware.

A custom with P. T. Barnum is to advise every man who has a wife to give her a signed pledge as a New Year's gift.

If a man wants to drown sorrow in the bowl let him try a bowl of water. Bowls of liquor are already too full of sorrow.

A man who takes to farming because he has failed at everything else should not expect any better success than in other operations.

A Michigan man cut off a six inch limb sixty feet from the ground by firing at it, the job requiring 67 bullets. He was after honey.

They who degrade holy things thereby degrade themselves. They who degrade marriage into a yoke degrade themselves into a team.

She: "I will play for you, but what would you like best?" He: "Ah—well, play some German pieces, with those very long rests, don't you know?"

W. H. Wells, of Chicago, has one of the finest collections of English dictionaries and grammars in the country. Of grammars he has 1200, no two being alike.

No love is so intense as that of the 18-year-old youth for the 28-year-old girl. He gets over it, of course, but while it's in motion it's 60 miles an hour, including stops.

Social circles in Portland, Oregon, have been racked recently over a suit brought by a florist for the price of a bouquet which a young man presented to a bridesmaid and then refused to pay for.

What is the best color of the eye for good shooting? As a rule, the eyes of the very best shots are nearly all blue; a number have grayish eyes, but the man with black eyes or brown eyes very rarely gets bull's-eyes.

A woman in Pennsylvania has been arrested for extracting money from the mails. But why a woman of Pennsylvania? The crime, if it be one, is universally practised, as every husband can testify to his sorrow.

Some men are always superior to circumstances. A Nebraska man was carried 40 miles by a cyclone and dropped in a widow's front yard. He married the widow and returned home worth about $30,000 more than when he started.

Colonel Frederick Grant has a small aquarelle painting in a gilt frame. It represents a group of Indians, and shows evidence of artistic skill and training. "It is one of a series painted by my father," said Colonel Grant to a reporter.

She: "I was so glad that you asked me to dance with you to-night, Mr. Random." Her: "Ah! indeed, you flatter me." She: "Oh, no, but Olive Ovington said you were the worst dancer on the floor, and I wanted to find out if she told the truth. She did."

Young Smallwage: "I desire to purchase a ring for my fiancee." Obliging Jeweler: "Yes? How long have you been engaged?" Young Smallwage: "Nearly three years." Obliging Jeweler, to assistant: "Ah, yes! James, show this gentleman some of those imitation garnets."

The few moments in the course of each day which a man absorbed in some worldly pursuit may carelessly expend in kind words or charities to those around him—and kindness to an animal is one of these—are perhaps, in the sight of Heaven, the only time that he has lived to any purpose worthy of recording.

Authors do not always write a legible hand. A New York author on a summer's day sent a note home to his wife asking her to forward by messenger a sheet of manuscript that he had left in his library. The boy soon returned with an old white hat. The author became very angry and destroyed the hat with his heels.

"What are you sealing up in that envelope so carefully, Jones?" "Imporian' instructions that I forgot to give my wife before I came down town this morning. Going to send it up to the house." "Will your wife open it at once?" "You bet she will. I've fixed all that." "How?" "Addressed it to myself and put a big 'private' on the corner of the envelope."

Perhaps a gentleman is rarer than many of us think for. Which of us can point out many such in his circle, men whose aims are generous, whose truth is constant, and not only constant in its kind, but elevated in degree, whose want of meanness makes them simple, who can look the world honestly in the face, with equal manly sympathy for the great and the small.

An Englishman railing at the White House was discanting to President Lincoln, who had never been abroad, upon the difference between Englishmen and Americans. "Great difference in some respects," he said—"great difference. You Americans do things that English gentlemen would never think of doing. Now, for instance, an English gentleman would never think of blacking his own boots." "Ah, indeed!" said Lincoln. "Whose would he black?"

Recent Book Issues.

A very valuable manual prepared by a teacher of experience, and one thoroughly familiar with the needs and tastes of children, is "Schoolroom Games and Exercises," by Elizabeth G. Bainbridge, brought out by The Interstate Publishing Company, of Chicago and Boston. The author believes and THE POST also, the introduction of such exercises as the book contains will not only rest the pupils, but will amuse them, brighten their faculties, concentrate their attention, and strengthen them for a renewal of more difficult mental work. Price, 75 cents.

FRESH PERIODICALS.

With the New Year the *Home Journal*, of Boston, made a new departure. It now goes before the public enlarged, improved, and in a more compact and attractive form, much like that of THE POST. It is a paper edited with much intelligence, care and taste, making specialties, as it were, of the higher personal art and educational influences of the home life. In its new form it will certainly lose none of its old time value and attractiveness.

The *Popular Science Monthly* for January is unusually rich in articles bearing upon social and educational topics. The contents comprise the following: "What Makes the Rich Richer and the Poor Poorer," "Misgovernment of Great Cities," "A Scientific Mission to Cambodia," (illustrated): "The White-Footed Mouse," "Manual Instruction" "The Intermingling of Races," "Science in Religious Education," "The Hound of the Plains," "The Experimental Study of Nature," "Vinegar and Its Mother," "The Week of Seven Days," by the Bishop of Carlisle; "The Voices of Animals," "Sketch of Nicholas Prejevalski" (with portrait); "Correspondence," "Editor's Table—Political Skepticism—A Wonderful Argument," "Literary Notices," "Popular Miscellany," "Notes," D. Appleton & Co., publishers, New York.

The contents of the January *Eclectic Magazine* are varied and readable. The articles are selected from the leading English magazines, and include the following: "The Moujiks and Russian Democracy," "Economic Socialism," "Democracy and Taste"; "Our Grandmothers," by the Countess of Jersey; "The Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture in France," by Lady Dilke; "Gastronomic Value of Odors," "Gustave Flaubert and George Sand"; "Henry D. Thoreau"; "Chaucer and Boccaccio"; "The Rulers of the Balkans"; "England vs. Europe"; "Philosophy of Dancing"; "Will Culture Outgrow Christianity," and several agreeable lighter contributions. This is the first number of the new volume, and contains a fine steel engraving of Milan Cathedral. E. R. Pelton, publisher, 25 Bond street, New York.

St. Nicholas for January presents all its usual attractions, which are many and varied. There is an article on "Millet and the Children," with numerous illustrations; two Eton papers, "A Glimpse of Eton School," and "A Visit to Eton," appropriately illustrated, "The Story of Prince Fairyfoot," is continued; as is "A Fortunate Opening," and there are fresh chapters of "Juan and Juanita." Mrs. Alling's "Christmas Conspiracy" culminates successfully both for the conspirators and their victim. Rose Hawthorne Lathrop, also, has a timely and amusing story, "With a Purpose," and the number opens with an old time poem by Edith M. Thomas, called "Ye Merry Christmas Feast," charmingly engrossed and illustrated. Two good poems, "The Galley Cat" and "When Grandpa was a little boy," are also finely illustrated. There are also more "Brownies," by Palmer Cox, and contributions by Geo. Foster Barnes, J. G. Francis, Alice Wellington Rollins and others.

No periodical in this country fills a more important place in literature than does *The Magazine of American History*. The January number opens the seventeenth volume in a brilliant manner. The opening paper is one of remarkable interest; giving a history of the beginning of Journalism in America, under the heading, "A Group of Pre-Revolutionary Editors." It is profusely illustrated, including fac-similes of the first pages of several pre-revolutionary journals. The article is written by Hon. S. G. W. Benjamin. J. L. Payne gives "A Curious Chapter in Vermont History"; Major J. W. Bunday contributes a "Tribute to ex-President Chester A. Arthur," and a superb portrait of Mr. Arthur is given as a frontispiece to the magazine. Hon. John W. Johnston gives an interesting sketch of Nathaniel Bacon, "The First American Rebel." Charles H. Peck gives the first of a series of studies in politics, the subject being John Van Buren. A. W. Clason furnishes an interesting history of "The Baltimore Convention, 1860." The different valuable departments are full of notable matter. Published at 30 Lafayette place, New York.

BEFORE we passionately desire anything which another enjoys we should examine into the happiness of its possessor.

A Ghost

is a myth, but solid reality will be known by those who write to Hallett & Co., Portland, Maine, thereby learning free, about work that they can do and live at home, wherever they reside, at a profit of from $5 to $25 and upwards daily. Some have earned over $50 in a day. Capital not needed. Hallett & Co., will start you. All is new. Delay not. Pay absolutely sure from the start. Wealth awaits every worker. Both sexes. All ages.

Was She a Flirt?

BY B. B.

ARE you engaged to be married to Charles Daulton, Kate?" asked Anne Duncan, as they sat chatting together by the drawing-room window, the latter having called in on her rounds to have a chat with her friend.

"Pray why do you ask that question?" retorted Kate Littleton, rather peevishly.

"Oh, I asked merely for information!" replied Annie.

"Well, what put such an idea into your head? I cannot guess who told you. I am sure I never breathed such a thing!"

"Such is the current report, Kate. But you have not told me whether it is true. To tell you the truth, I believe it is."

"Yes, I'll own to it, though I am ashamed of it."

"When are you going to be married?—or don't you intend to carry out your engagement?"

"I told him I would be married next winter; but I won't;—I'm tired of him already."

"Kate Littleton," said Anne, "will you promise to answer me a question if you can?"

"Yes, half a dozen, if they aren't too silly."

"How many times have you been engaged, then?"

"Oh, dear, what a ridiculous question! How can I remember all? Twenty times, perhaps!"

"I would not have anyone if I did not like them, Kate. But why did you not mention Harry Summers lately? I thought he stood at the head."

"Because I did not want to, Ann. I don't like to speak of him with those other fellows."

"But you were engaged to him, were you not?"

"Yes; we promised to have each other when we were children, and renewed the promise once a week regularly until he went away."

"Why did you, then, break the engagement? I should have thought it was so strong, no power on earth could have done it!"

"I thought so once; but now I have grown wiser. I have found, by sad experience that vows are things of air?"

"But you really loved Harry once?"

"Yes; and always have, and do so yet."

"Why what made you refuse him then?"

"I did not refuse him, Anne. The fact is that Harry Summers was poor, and he felt it. Edward Leslie's father was very wealthy; he had just returned from college, and frequently came to see me, though for nothing more than friendship, and because we were children together, as you yourself know. Harry was a little jealous; he hinted his suspicions to me. I was angry that he should suspect that I could love anyone more than him, and especially that I loved him less because he was poor. I told him, in a pet, that if he thought me so fickle, he could be released from our childish engagement. This only confirmed his suspicions. He left me. I received a letter of farewell from him. Where he went I never knew. He has probably forgotten me, and given his heart to some one more worthy of him; but I have never forgotten him, and never can. They call me a heartless coquette, perhaps Harry does. My heart is given to Harry, but I have lost his."

"But, Kate, if you have loved no one but Harry Summers, why have you so often promised to marry others? Was it for the sake of breaking your promise?"

"No, not exactly; I hardly know why I have done so. I have given you the reason for some of my engagements. I did not know but I might forget Harry, and love some other one; but I cannot. Sometimes I did it for fun, and sometimes I did it because I was reckless; but I will never promise to marry again. I'll tell Charles Daulton I cannot love him, and live a nun for Harry's sake."

"See that you keep that resolution," said Anne, laughing at Kate's sober conclusion.

"Oh, I'm in earnest. I'm tired of broken hearts and dying lovers; there is no sense in it. I am tired of being called cruel and hard-hearted. I'll give no more occasions for silly words and sickly sonnets. I am really determined never to marry."

"Perhaps you are serious, but I'll bet all I possess that you will be engaged again before the end of the winter."

"Very well. Anne we'll see."

Kate Littleton determined to become a nurse in one of the West End hospitals. Anne Duncan was to be married in a few weeks to Edward Leslie, and Kate had promised to be her bridesmaid.

This, like the promise between Kate and Harry Summers, had been made in childhood, and ratified every week since.

If Kate was married first, Anne was to be her bridesmaid: and if Anne was married first, Kate was to be hers.

Though Kate had made twenty promises to her beaux, and broken them all, and though she had declared that vows are things of air, yet these two promises she had ever considered sacred; and though her promise to Harry was now void, yet there were moments like that in which she had conversed with Anne Duncan when she felt, perhaps, it was binding, and she would live amidst sickness and suffering in a London hospital rather than trifle with or break that engagement.

The promise she had made to Anne, though of minor importance, was also a promise of childhood, and now remained a full force, and Kate deferred entering the hospital in order to fulfil it.

Anne's wedding was a joyous occasion to all save Kate Littleton. It had been long wished for and expected.

The parties were young, handsome, and happy in each other's love. The wedding party was large and fashionable. The apartments (it was by special license) were splendidly adorned. The wedding breakfast was rare and sumptuous.

The bride was elegantly arrayed. She looked almost as beautiful as Kate. The bridegroom looked better than usual, but not so well, Kate thought, as Harry Summers.

But all this happiness, elegance, beauty, and bliss had no charm for Kate. She had dressed herself richly and with taste, and looked beautiful, for she could not do otherwise.

She seemed happy and well pleased, for she could not be otherwise at Anne's wedding; yet she felt that such a festival night might have been, but never would be, for her.

That all those happy smiles, and joyous wishes, and bridal kisses might have been lavished upon her who would be soon far away from such scenes.

When she looked at Edward, the happy bridegroom, she thought of Harry and their sad parting, and longed for the hospital work which should drive such sad thoughts away.

It is evening. Gay music echoes through the festive halls. Youth and beauty join in the light-footed dance, but as Kate accepted the hand of the first dancer who had offered himself, she felt it would be her last.

Her partner was a young gentleman from India. He had just arrived.

Kate had been introduced to him as Lieutenant Charlton, an old friend of Edward Leslie's, who had returned in order to visit his friends, and be present at Edward's wedding.

He was tall, erect, of a fine figure, with large, regular features, and dark expressive eyes. He was noble and dignified, and commanding in his bearing, graceful in the dance—all that a girl could love. Before they had finished the first set, Kate was deeply interested in his conversation, and thought he bore a strong resemblance to Harry Summers.

She was tired and did not take part in the second quadrille; but Lieutenant Charlton sat by her, and was even more interesting than in the dance.

Anne Duncan (now Mrs. Leslie) looked at them and thought of the hospital nurse.

Lieutenant Charlton attended Kate to the supper table. She did not flirt; she was evidently pleased with him.

He handed her into the carriage, and Kate asked him to call upon her. He called the next morning.

Winter was not more than half finished when Mrs. Leslie received a note, stating she was once more engaged to be married, and before the end of winter, in the middle of January, there was a splendid and elegant wedding.

Kate Littleton was married at last to Harry Summers. The plot and fictitious name had been contrived by Anne Duncan and Edward Leslie.

The climate and hardships of India had so altered Harry, that even his father and mother had at first failed to recognise their son; and no wonder that poor Kate, while brooding over her change of occupation in a London hospital, did not know her handsome lover of long ago.

THE GOOD OLD TIMES.—Ivan the Terrible, of Russia, forgot neither his devotions nor his diversions. For his pastime, bears were brought from Novgorod. When from his window he saw a group of people collected, he let slip two or three of these ferocious animals, and his delight on beholding the flight of the terrified creatures, and especially on hearing the cries of the victims, was unbounded, his bursts of laughter being loud and long continued. To console those who were maimed for life, he would sometimes send a small piece of gold to each of them.

Another of his chief amusements was in the company of jesters, whose duty it was to divert him, especially before and after his executions. But they often paid dearly for an unseasonable joke. Among those jesters none was more distinguished than Prince Gvosdof, who held a high rank at court. The Czar being one day dissatisfied with a jest, poured over his head a boiling basin of soup. The agonized wretch prepared a retreat from the table, but the tyrant struck him with a knife, and he fell senseless and weltering in his blood. Dr. Aveniip was called.

"Save my good servant," said the Czar. "I have jested with him a little too hard."

"So hard," said the doctor, "that only God, your Majesty, can restore him to life; he no longer breathes."

Ivan expressed his contempt, called the deceased favorite a dog, and continued his amusement.

Another day, while he sat at table, the Voyvod of Staritza, Boris Titof, appeared, bowed to the ground, and saluted him after the customary manner. "God save thee, my dearest Voyvod. Thou deservest a proof of my favor," said the Czar, and he seized a knife and cut off an ear. Titof thanked him for the gracious favor, and wished him a happy reign.

NEW YEAR'S DAY was not observed as a holiday in Sing Sing Prison, the convicts, who dislike being locked in their cells all day, as must be the case when no work is to be done, having requested the warden not to keep it as a holiday.

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In from one to twenty minutes never fails to relieve PAIN with one thorough application. No matter how violent or excruciating the pain, the Rheumatic, Bedridden, Infirm, Crippled, Nervous, Neuralgic, or prostrated with disease may suffer, RADWAY'S READY RELIEF will afford instant ease. It instantly relieves and soon cures

Rheumatism,	**Neuralgia,**
Coughs,	**Colds,**
Cold in the Head,	**Sore Throat,**
Asthma,	**Bronchitis,**
Pneumonia,	**Sciatica,**
Headache,	**Inflammations,**
Toothache,	**Congestion,**
Sprains,	**Bruises,**
Frostbites,	**Chilblains.**

It will in a few moments, when taken according to directions, cure Cramps, Spasms, Sour Stomach, Heartburn, Sick Headache, Summer Complaint, Diarrhœa, Dysentery, Colic, Wind in the Bowels, and all internal pains.

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SARSAPARILLIAN RESOLVENT,

The Great Blood Purifier

For the Cure of all Chronic Diseases.

Chronic Rheumatism, Scrofulous Complaints, &c., Glandular Swelling, Hacking Dry Cough, Cancerous Affections, Bleeding of the Lungs, Dyspepsia, Water Brash, White Swellings, Tumors, Pimples, Blotches, Eruptions of the Face, Ulcers, Hip Disease, Gout, Dropsy, Rickets, Salt Rheum, Bronchitis, Consumption, Diabetes, Kidney, Bladder, Liver Complaints, etc. Sold by all druggists. $1 a bottle.

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DR. RADWAY'S PILLS are a cure for this complaint. They restore strength to the stomach and make it perform its functions. The symptoms of Dyspepsia disappear, and with them the liability of the system to contract diseases. Take the medicine according to directions and observe what we say in "False and True" respecting diet.

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☞Information worth thousands will be sent to you.

TO THE PUBLIC:

☞Be sure and ask for **RADWAY'S**, and see that the name "**RADWAY**" is on what you buy.

Humorous.

WHAT SHE PROPOSED.

In a boat drifting idly, idly,
Sat a youth and a maiden fair;
The sunbeams played at hide and seek
In the tangles of her hair;
Before her he sat enchanted,
Charmed by her mazie spell,
His dark eyes mutely pleading
The love he longed to tell.

"Beatrice, dear," he whispered,
"Would it not be a beautiful dream
To drift on thus forever
Along Life's placid stream!"
Beatrice played with the tiller-ropes;
"I shouldn't mind it, Ned,
Drifting with you down the stream of Life,
If I might steer!" she said.

—U. N. NONE.

An end man—The undertaker.

A green grocer—One who does not sand his sugar.

The most inveterate borrowers are those who borrow trouble.

How is it that a man can act so well on the stage and so badly off it?

A smart schoolboy says it takes thirteen letters to spell "cow," and proves it thus: "See-O-double-you."

An instrument has been invented for opening mail matter. It is called "letter rip." It couldn't alphabetter name.

The gentleman with the cloven hoof is very likely to be found in company with the gentleman with the cloven breath.

Why may the inhabitants of the Polar regions be supposed to be fashionable people?—Because they move in the highest circle."

The new $3 silver certificates are all ready for distribution. They are just twice as attractive as the $1 certificates, in the opinion of thrifty critics.

At Camden a woman swallowed her artificial teeth last week; but her mouth is said to be so big that she could swallow her own head if the paint on her face wouldn't gag her.

"Now, Mr. Witness, are you willing to swear solemnly that the chair was really facing the east?" Witness: "Well, I won't swear, sir, but I'll bet you ten dollars it was."

Sprigs: "How much older is your sister than you, Johnny?" Johnny: "Maud used to be twenty-five years, then she was twenty and now she ain't only eighteen. I guess we'll soon be twins."

A remarkably hard drinker, who was expiring, begged one of his friends who was at his bedside to bring him a goblet of water, telling him, "On our death-beds we must be reconciled to our enemies."

As the convalescent patient said to the doctor when an extravagant bill was presented, "What's the use of your saving my life if you shove a bill at me afterwards so big that I worry myself to death over it?"

"Yes, Columbus was a wise man; he showed his people how to make an egg stand—" "Chestnut," shouted a bright light, interrupting the teacher, "come 'round the corner an' I'll show you a peanut stand."

School teacher: "Why was Solomon said to be the wisest man that ever lived?" Smart pupil: "'Cause he fooled several hundred mothers-in-law, and pa says it takes a pretty smart man to get ahead of one mother-in-law."

"Yes," said the chairman sadly, "our temperance meeting last night would have been more successful if the lecturer hadn't been so absent-minded." "What did he do?" "He tried to blow the froth from a glass of water."

Mistress: "Didn't the alarm clock go off?" Bridget: "It must have went off, mum; for I can't found it this mornin'!" Mistress: "Why, what did you do with it?" Bridget: "I just laid it on the shed in the back yard, mum, so that it wouldn't annoy me."

Florrie was given two apples because she had behaved well. "Come," said her mother, "don't be greedy. Give one of them to your little brother." Florrie, with very good grace, held out the fruit to her brother. "You may choose," said she, "but don't take the biggest one."

Men are strange creatures. They will waste an hour hunting a collar button instead of having an extra supply and letting their wife find the missing one. A wife never searches for a lost pin. Her husband finds it when he walks around in his bare feet.

The faith cure. Little Dot: "I heard your mamma tell my mamma you were getting to be a awful good boy." Little Dick: "Yes, I am." "She said she knew now what you wanted for Christmas, 'cause she heard you a prayin' for them." "Yes, I prayed real loud so she would."

Grandma: "Clara, do you think your mother would approve of your sitting up so late?" Clara: "Why, grandma, it was only 10:30 o'clock when Frank left last evening." Grandma: "Clara, your grandma happened to be awake just as Frank was leaving, and didn't she hear him say, 'Now, Clara, just one?'"

Tramp, to gentleman in the Park: "Will you kindly allow me to glance at your paper for a moment, sir? I am anxious to see the weather predictions." Gentleman, handing him the paper: "Certainly. Are you interested in the weather?" Tramp: "Yes, sir. I live principally on wind, and I want to find out what I am to have for dinner today."

Bluffum is possessed of a broad spirit. There is nothing contracted about Bluffum. He was reading the other evening the card of a woman in the newspaper, in which she demanded that women be admitted into certain professions and occupations. "There's my sentiments!" exclaimed Bluffum, with unwonted emphasis. "Give woman a right to labor wherever she wants to. Hang it! she may do all the work, for aught I care."

WONDERS OF PLANT-LIFE.

A WORLD of curiosities is revealed in the arboreal kingdom. The Banyan tree is said to be capable of sheltering not less than seven thousand men, and is still continuing to extend its branches over new territory.

The roots spring from the limbs of the tree, and falling like ropes, they enter the ground, and in process of time become thick, stout pillars, each tree forming a grove by itself.

The Baobab or Monkey-Bread tree is another most extraordinary production of nature.

Imagine to yourself a tree, thirty feet in diameter at the base, and only forty feet high, with the trunk rapidly diminishing towards the top, and then spreading out into what looks like a little forest.

In one of the old trees the branches form a spherical head a hundred to a hundred and fifty feet in diameter, the centre branch rising to the height of sixty feet, while others drop over the main trunk, and conceal it from view.

Some of these trees have been hollowed out, and a space made large enough to hold twenty to thirty men, without any apparent injury to the tree.

Some of these trees are estimated to be five thousand years old, and dates are cut in the bark which were made in the fourteenth century.

A slender, erect shrub grows in India, to which the name of the Telegraph plant has been given, because of a resemblance to railway telegraph signals in the motion of the leaves, the two side ones rising and falling alternately for a time, when they rest for a season, and being most active in the early morning.

Sometimes many of the leaves may be seen in action at once, and then again only a few seem to be inspired with motion, which shows that their action does not depend upon the wind.

The Silk-cotton tree grows in the Bahama Islands, where there is scarcely any depth of soil; and in order to meet this emergency, the roots extend over a very long stretch of the ground, showing themselves near the surface, while the round and rather slim trunk is supported by six or eight regularly-formed buttresses, that have a purely artificial look, and are large enough to conceal a man from the view.

The value of the plant-world, not only in furnishing the pulpy material of which paper is manufactured, but also in supplying the paper itself outright, may not be fully appreciated by all our readers. It is well known that the Egyptian papyrus, in early days, was the main source from which anything like our modern paper was derived.

This was a reed that grew by the brooks, with a stem six to ten feet high, and about an inch in diameter. These were peeled, the pith cut into thin slices, which were then laid side by side with the edges touching another.

After being sprinkled with water, a heavy pressure was applied, and they were thus united into one piece. It may not be so generally known that there now grows in Asia a tree the bark of which is made into sheets about a yard square, and these are used for all the ordinary purposes of paper, being very tough and durable.

The soft and beautiful Chinese rice-paper is not the product of any part of the rice-plant, but it is the pith of a tree which, by the aid of a lathe and sharp instrument, is cut into very thin and delicate rolls.

The lighting materials furnished by trees is another thing worth noting; among which may be mentioned the Japanese wax tree, which bears bunches of fruit, growing like grapes, and containing a species of wax, used in making candles.

Another tree is found in the Pacific Islands known as the candle-nut, which yields a large amount of oil, the kernels being strung together on a stick and lighted as a candle.

We may also mention the candle tree, the fruit of which is three or four feet in length, and about an inch in diameter, and of a yellowish color, "hanging from the tree so as to present the appearance of wax candles, and in such abundance as to give the idea of a chandler's shop."

One would hardly expect to find anything like soap growing on a tree, but there is such a production in tropical America, the rind of what is called the Soap-tree fruit forming a strong lather when it is immersed in water.

The substance known as vegetable ivory is, the product of a tree which bears a fruit about the size of a man's head, and weighing about thirty pounds, each containing forty nuts, which are solid, hard and white, and very much resembling the genuine ivory.

With such a load to carry, we are not surprised to learn that the stem of the tree, which is less than a foot in diameter, may sometimes be seen, not only very much bent from its upright position, but actually crawling on the ground.

There are several kinds of trees from which our ordinary cork is derived, and by a wise provision of nature, when the outer coating of the bark has ripened, it may be removed without injury to the inner bark, which continues growing.

The Bamboo Blowpipe, as it is generally called, although it is only one and a half inches in diameter, grows to the height of fifty or sixty feet, and for about sixteen feet it has no joints. It is known as "the rifle of the Indian," and in his hands, or rather in his mouth, becomes a formidable weapon for blowing poisoned arrows.

These are a few specimens of the rarer curiosities of the plant world, but the list might be extended almost indefinitely.

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LAIRD'S WHITE LILAC TOILET SOAP is *refreshing* and *soothing* to the skin, leaving it beautifully *clear soft* and *smooth*.

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TO PLAY MUSIC
WITHOUT STUDY!

This Can Be Done by Means of the

INSTANTANEOUS GUIDE to the PIANO or ORGAN.

Anyone knowing a tune, either "in the head," as it is called, or able to hum, whistle or sing, can play it WITHOUT ANY PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE OF MUSIC OR THE INSTRUMENTS. In fact it may be the first time they have ever seen a piano or organ, yet if they know so much as to whistle or hum a tune—say "Way Down on the Suwanee River," for instance—they can play it IMMEDIATELY, correctly and with good effect, on the piano or organ, with the assistance of this GUIDE. THE GUIDE shows how the tunes are to be played with both hands and in different keys. Thus the player has the full effect of the bass and treble clefs, together with the power of making correct and harmonious chords in accompaniments. It must be plainly understood that the Guide will not make an accomplished musician without study. It will do nothing of the kind. What it can do, do well and WITHOUT FAIL, is to enable anyone understanding the nature of a tune or air in music to play such tunes or airs, without ever having opened a music book, and without previously needing to know the difference between A or G, a half-note or a quarter-note, a sharp or a flat. The Guide is placed on the instrument, and the player, without reference to anything but what he is shown by it to do, can in a few moments play the piece accurately and without the least trouble. Although it does not and never can supplant regular books of study, it will be of incalculable assistance to the player by "ear" and all others who are their own instructors. By giving the student the power to play IMMEDIATELY twelve tunes of different character—this number of pieces being sent with each Guide—the ear grows accustomed to the sounds, and the fingers used to the position and touch of the keys. So, after a very little practice with the Guide, it will be easy to pick out, almost with the skill and rapidity of the trained player, any air or tune that may be heard or known.

The Guide, we repeat, will not learn how to read the common sheet music. But it will teach those who cannot spend years learning an instrument, how to learn a number of tunes without EITHER PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE OR STUDY. A child if it can say its A, B, C's and knows a tune—say "The Sweet Bye and Bye"—can play it, after a few attempts, quite well. There are many who would like to be able to do this, for their own and the amusement of others, and to such we commend The Guide as BOUND TO DO for them ALL WE SAY. Its cheapness and usefulness, moreover, would make it a very good present to give a person, whether young or old, at Christmas. Almost every home in the land has a piano, organ or melodeon, whereon seldom more than one of the family can play. With this Guide in the house everybody can make more or less good use of their instruments.

The Guide will be sent to any address, all postage paid, on receipt of FIFTY CENTS. (Postage stamps, 2's, taken.) For Ten Cents extra a music book, containing the words and music for 100 popular songs, will be sent with The Guide. Addr

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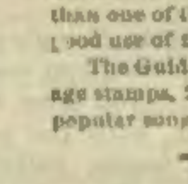
SHE knew all about it. First Chicagoan.—"How's your wife?" Second Chicagoan.—"Haven't got any wife." F. C.—"What! Divorced?" S. C.—"Yes." F. C.—"Why, you are the third husband she's been divorced from?" S. C.—"Yes." F. C.—"She is quite literary, isn't she?" S. C.—"Yes." F. C.—"What is she doing now?" S. C.—"She is writing a book about 'How to Make Home Happy.'"

"As between a dog and a dude for a summer resort pet," said a young lady, as a young man left her side, "give me the dog." "Why?" asked her companion. "The dog never says anything." "Neither does the dude, does he?" "No; he never says anything, but he makes me tired talking so much."

DRAINS.—The most effectual remedy for slimy and greasy drain pipes is copperas dissolved and left to work gradually through the pipe.



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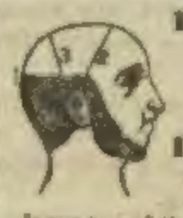

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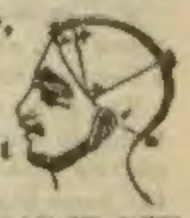

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Latest Fashion Phases.

Many minds are exercised at the present moment on the important matter of what bonnet to choose. I would advise velvet; it is to be the material of the season.

The newest mode of trimming the brim is with graduated balls of feathers matching the tones of the feather on the bonnet, the most fashionable being stiff wings intermingled with osprey.

The plumage of this most useful bird has never been more in request, and the stiff upright feathers are often formed into a large upstanding decoration for the front of hats and bonnets.

Nearly all the new ones have feathers or small pieces of fur to imitate the breast of a bird; and on one Paris model, decorated with baude of beaver, the heads of two of the little animals nestled at one side.

Ostrich feathers, however, are the some of fashion—so much so, that some of the bonnets are entirely composed of the well-curled flue of the ostrich plume.

On many of the fronts and sides are some eight or nine ostrich tips, intermixed with an osprey aigrette.

The Impean is much the mode, and the prettiest graduated feather balls I have yet seen at the edge of brims were made of Impean feathers. Of course the foundation is wood or cork; at all events, the balls are hard and firm.

Curious colors are combined this year—heliotrope and mousse, terra-cotta and gold. Mud tones are still worn with a brilliant yellow, which goes by the name of Cleopatra. These also blend well with all the numerous range of heliotrope and petunia shades now so fashionable. There is great novelty in the colorings.

The old rose and the old blue tones which are associated with Louis XIV. and XV. times are fashionable, also the eucalyptus, which is, perhaps, the most truly artistic tint of green that has come to the fore of late years.

The brightest tone of poppy red and a charming ruby called "pavot," and another a rival to the poppy, viz., flame, are worn. Nicile is a very tender peach, also it the most generally becoming color there is. Brown always find favor in the season when nature assumes a livery of similar coloring; a new red brown goes by the name of boreal, and a slightly darker, terraine. Pactole is a bright and pretty gold, which peeps in with many admixtures of color. Eau de Nil comes out under the new name of "Lemon." Lynx and loutre appeal to more subdued tastes.

Mousse velvet bonnets are perfectly smothered, often with black lace.

The crowns of new bonnets are sometimes soft, and gathered in the centre, like a German student's cap.

The bows of ribbon introduced on to the fronts of some of the bonnets are made of narrow cream silk ribbon with a picot edge, the loops high and upstanding.

Jet is used on most bonnets in the form of buckles and crescents, especially with the mousse tones.

There is a charming new color called "mode," a pinkish yellow, which makes up admirably with beaver borderings. If any one wants something exceptionally stylish, I should recommend them to order this. If a traveling bonnet is needed, cloth worked in silks and gold of a subdued but Oriental nature is the most distinguished.

The milliners draw their inspirations from various sources, and do not now and then disdain classic ground; at all events, many of the stringless bonnets and round crowned hats, vividly recall the helmets in which the god Mercury is portrayed, the wings at the side carried out with stiff white ones.

Small tortoiseshell combs with two prongs fasten some of the bows of ribbon at the back of crowns.

There is a great deal of colored lace embroidered in frise stitch in used with many tints, and one of the latest novelties is a bonnet covered with gold filigree buttons: the foundation, velvet chenille, plays its part in millinery, and an important part too.

A brown and blue bonnet, that pleased me much, had chenille brim edged with brown graduated seede of some foreign plant; an owl on one side. Owls are quite in favor now. The strings are made of narrow ribbon with picot edge.

Ribbons are used not only in millinery, but down the sides of ball dresses, looping up draperies for ordinary gowns. Very tempting bows, are sold in the new colors, and mixtures of tones for wearing in the hair or on one shoulder. There are several novelties in ribbons.

Plain silk and velvet have picot edges, and there are many reversible, viz., with silk one side, and velvet on the other. Some have lacelike edges; 2¼ inches is the most usual width. Others display plush stripes, and there are many crepe ribbons with and without satin stripes in one or more colors. Some have a picot edge on one side, fringe at the other. Many of the marbled plush stripes have silk grounds. A favorite edge is a series of silk loops; moire and plush stripes appear on the same ribbon. Shaded fringed edges and shaded ribbons are generally new. Tufted fringes are the form a few of the ribbons assume; many of the edges are interpleated and others are of a mossy description; some have a collection of five cords at the edge.

Pretty fancy collars are worn made in different colored velvets, and are meant to stand upright, with loops of gold above the velvet.

Jet collars of the same form are supplemented by a V shaped plastron, and pelerines of jet are made to cross in front. These are most becoming to slender figures.

I have just seen a covetable set of furs, viz., bonnet, muff, and boa, the two latter in one. They were made of the most fashionable fur of the season, viz., the blue fox, the blue velvet bonnet was trimmed with it, and a small blue bird; the boa was long, the muff was attached to it at the waist, and had blue birds hovering over it.

Boas are so comfortable that of course we are not going to let such a charming fashion go out, and furriers have much improved on them by inserting a spring in such a manner that they fit closely around the throat.

They are made in dark furs, squirrel tail, and the new imitation blue fox; they reach to the hem of the dress. Fox furs are much worn, both the so called Paris, and the Lapland fox.

Bear and wolverine are better adapted to capes, which this year are much shorter and smaller, and generally less important than formerly.

Fur collars of fur are to be extensively worn as the season advances. Beaver and natura furs are the best of good styles, and they are being made up into large, flat boas, trimmed with tails.

Muffs are larger if made of fur, and have cords but no tassels. Plush muffs are likely to be even more worn than fur, having outside pockets, which are a great convenience.

There are no great novelties in the glove department, though, if you please, you may clothe your hands in any color you elect to deck the rest of your person, with the result, I fear, we shall see red hands, yellow hands, and bright mauve, making them look twice as large, and spoiling the most elaborate attire. Long gray gloves, with many buttons, sewn with black, are among the newest introductions.

In Paris everything seems to be mixed with tulle that is destined for full dress. Very dainty little bouquets are being sold for the bodices in that bewitching capital, made of flowers, tulle and ribbon, intermixed, or even with ostrich feather tips covered all over with tulle; quite a new idea. Osprey aigrettes are much worn on the side of the head.

For gowns the point d'esprit net is in demand. A curious gown I have just seen had a bright electric-blue satin bodice and tunic, cut into four long tabs, which fell over a salmon tulle skirt, made bouffante. Many of the tulle and gauze skirts are tucked, and beaded tulles carry all before them.

An old fashion has been revived on new lines, veils can now be bought with springs, which easily and perfectly adjust themselves to the bonnet. Our mothers, when they wore the voluminous ones then in fashion, did the same; the patent is called the Princess veil, and is very light.

We are to wear hoods of all kinds; there are many pretty ones made for leaving the theatre; but this is by no means their only destination, for they are a necessary part of dressing gowns, morning gowns and cloaks, and are mostly lined with a contrasting color.

Cloaks as well as dresses are being made of corduroy, and it is wonderfully pretty in the new shades of heliotrope. It is well adapted to tea gowns, but is out of place for dinner gowns, for which purpose it is often now turned.

Odds and Ends.

SOME NEW FANCY WORK.

A new style of decoration, termed "cable work," will commend itself to ladies who like to produce something effective and showy without the expenditure of overmuch labor.

In its favor we can say that it has not that poor appearance that some styles have on which little real work is bestowed. The name is characteristic, for miniature cables of various colors are employed as a background to flowers and foliage.

A few words of description may interest our readers. Take, for example, a mantel border of dark peacock plush. On this is a conventional design richly embroidered in well-blended crewels. This is outlined with fine cable twine, which, in its turn, is outlined with Japanese gold.

At intervals of an inch and a half or so the cable is sewn on, apparently without any formal arranged plan, in curved lines to serve as a background, but, in truth, some thought is required in placing the twine, or the effect of the flowers would be seriously damaged.

A handsome border of felt is worked in Henry II. style, with bold conventional design, carried out in softly shaded arasene, outlined with couching of silk.

This affords a massive decoration fit for use in a spacious dining-room where the fine old oak furniture, that has seen many a generation come and go, needs some warm coloring to brighten it and contrast with its splendid though somewhat sober tone.

At this school the Byzantine style of decoration is in great favor. The designs are carried out in broad outline, the veins and stems of flowers being put in with Japanese gold.

Brackets are ornamented with conventional foliage, and monkeys worked in chenille climb about and cling on to the stems. Possibly the idea originated with the chenille monkeys that have been so popular of late as ornaments (save the mark.) There is the ever demanded quality of novelty about the design, but to our taste it is somewhat lacking in artistic value.

The made-up fancy goods are peculiarly tempting. An Eastern wicker bowl makes a charming standing work-basket when set upon three japanned legs. The bowl is draped with copper colored plush, a full scarf being drawn up tightly on one side. Over the legs there fall vandykes of copper damask, edged with pompons.

The lining of the bowl is copper damask, and the top edge is prettily finished with a frilling of damask. The sack cushions are new and fashionable. A showy but decidedly taking one is of deep crimson plush, the underpart or back being of olive-green plush. The medallion which ornaments the front is of crimson satin worked in arasene, the nook in dark green plush, and the ribbon strings and bows match in color.

A lawful shape for a bascock is the "cracker," but it answers its purpose quite as well as many others, and is, indeed, far preferable to the small old fashioned round ones, that tipped up or toppled over at the slightest touch. The foundation, is of course, thoroughly firm, and the shape is rather too much flattened to be of the true cracker style.

It is of plush with full ends, which are lined with old gold satin, the medallion of satin almost covers the top; the design is Byzantine, done entirely in gold filoselle outlined with gold; both ends are tied with cord finished off with a number of loops.

Flour tubs covered with plush have their hoops and handles uncovered, this gives the impression that the article is not completed, but what matters so long as the idea is fresh? Double nightdress sachets are in vogue; one corner is turned back, which allows of the embroidering of the monogram on a contrasting colored lining.

A beautiful cushion is made of plush, and it deserves more than a mere passing notice. One corner of the plush covering is fastened back with a simulated pin. Both this corner of plush and the corner of the cushion beneath are covered with cream satin. On the former is a bunch of daffodils, and some of the blossoms fall on the latter, which is still further ornamented with lattice-work in soft green shades of filoselle. The idea is extremely artistic, the lattice-work making the cushion corner to retire, as it were, whilst the pure cream satin becomes more pronounced by the gently accentuated contrast.

A description of fancy work would hardly be complete without the mention of some screens, which seem to be well nigh as indispensable pieces of furniture as tables and chairs, so generally are they used. One deserving a place in the daintiest of ladies' boudoirs is a masterpiece of art work. To describe it minutely would take up too much space, so the mere indication of its merits must suffice:

The screen is three-fold and rather small. Each leaf is divided into panels, which are covered with delicately-tinted blue and cream satin, a deep gold colored band separating the lower panels. The centre design is composed of a group of three swans exquisitely rendered, on the water, surrounded by rushes. The side folds are devoted to draperies, containing fruits and flowers, and further ornamented with entwined cornucopiæ and foliage. On the upper panel musical instruments are represented, and the lower ones, if memory serves, are ornamented with grapes and foliage. The frame is formed of ebonized carved wood. The perfect harmony, not alone in coloring, but in proportion and form also, combined to create a most noteworthy instance of what can be accomplished by designers and embroiderers imbued with true artistic feeling.

All kinds of articles in domestic use have their turn of popularity among ladies who spend their leisure hours in doing fancy work.

Not long ago chamber towels were in favor, and the ends were embellished with figures or quaint devices in cross-stitch.

Sideboard cloths have had a long run, and, as for five o'clock tea cloths, surely the housewives who make any pretensions to living in polite society are few indeed who cannot number some of these indispensable items amongst their fancy-work treasures.

Confidential Correspondents.

E. L. M.—Keep the skin clean by the use of mild soap and plenty of water, take exercise in the open air, and eat only plain wholesome food in moderation.

DIANA.—The two, transpire and perspire have one meaning in common—namely, to emit the moisture of the body through the pores of the skin. The word transpire also means to escape from secrecy, to become public; as, the proceedings of the secret conclave transpired the day after the meeting.

J. H. E.—You should tell your friend that she would be acting in an unladylike way in sending any verses to a young man with whom she was not acquainted. If the young man really takes an interest in her, he will find means to make her acquaintance; a young woman cannot make open advances to a man without lowering herself in his esteem.

EUNICE—

"I will go to my tent and sit down in despair;
I will paint me black, and sever my hair;
I will sit on the shore where the wild hurricanes roar,
And reveal to the god of the tempest my woes?"

We cannot tell you where to find the rest of the poem from which you quote; but unless it is superior to the stanza you give, it can hardly be much loss if you never should find it.

M. C.—1. "Cotillon" is the name used in Europe for the dance which we call "the German." It is a dance in which any number of couples may take part, and which is varied according to the taste of the gentleman of the first couple, who is called the leader. Flowers, pretty trifles, and sometimes, among rich people, valuable presents, are distributed as favors by the gentlemen to the ladies, and vice versa. 2. "Dante" is pronounced "Dan-tay," the "a" being broad.

REVOLA.—You must not shilly-shally. Tell the girl exactly how you stand as to money; explain your prospects, and let her take her choice. According to what you say, you will be just of a discreet marrying age when your position enables you to take the great step, and waiting will do you no great harm if the girl does not grow weary. You cannot help falling in love, so do not reproach yourself; your only duty is to avoid harming the lady, and frankness will serve you best.

TODDLE.—It is indeed a mercy you stopped! The questions you ask would require, for proper answer, (1) a treatise on cabinet-making; (2) a treatise on optics; (3) one on photography; (4) one on water-color painting. Each one of these may be obtained at any bookseller's for a small sum. You are surely old enough to see that our column is not to be used to give information that any one can obtain for a little trouble and expense. Your writing might be greatly improved. Before proceeding to more difficult subjects try to improve your grammar.

E. M. D.—Your case is a hard one. It would be wrong to lay down a rule, that in every case a young woman should not marry a man unless her parents approve of him. In such circumstances sometimes parents forget they once were young themselves—a time when sentiment and feeling entered into their every action in relation to one another. But it was wrong in you to become engaged without first consulting your parents. This is perhaps the principal cause of their resentment towards the man of your choice. Our advice to you is, to wait patiently for a while, and perhaps your father's opposition to your marriage will fade out, especially as you have succeeded in gaining your brother over to your side.

S. T. S.—It is not known where the deepest place in the ocean is, as but a very small portion of it has been sounded. The deepest place yet discovered is said to be near the north-eastern extremity of Dampier Strait, about one hundred and twenty miles north of New Guinea. It is reported that the soundings in that vicinity showed a depression about eighteen miles long which varied in depth from 30,300 to 31,600 feet, or between five and six miles. Mount Everest, one of the Himalaya range, which is now supposed to be the highest mountain on the globe, towers to a height of 29,002 feet, which is over two thousand feet less than the measurement of the deepest spot yet found in the ocean.

J. T.—We do not see anything incredible in your friend's story. As a general thing, the memory of almost everybody is untrustworthy as to the personal appearance of an individual who has been seen but once. Not one person in a dozen, with exception of portrait painters and experienced detectives, sees a face accurately at any time. To be able to tell correctly what a person's features are, whom we saw only once six months ago, would be a task beyond the ability of almost any of us. Besides, in giving testimony in court, especially under a sharp cross-examination, witnesses are very apt to become confused, and their memory sometimes fails them, as it never does under other circumstances.

C. L.—Our law is in part founded on it, but when the criminal code of England was at its bloodiest, men were hung for all kinds of offences. Stealing to the amount of eight dollars in a dwelling-house was capital; forgery was capital; stealing to the value of one dollar from a shop was capital; stealing privately from a person was capital; and men and women and boys were hung for picking a pocket of a handkerchief. Trials at the Old Bailey were, it is stated, disposed of at an average rate of eight minutes and a half a case; and unhappy wretches were removed from the bar sentenced to death, screaming the while that they had not been fairly tried.

CECIL.—A ruby ring is too costly—except for rich people—for an engagement ring. The opal is not used, because there is a superstition that it will bring misfortune to the betrothed lady who wears it. The emerald is not fashionable, although why it is not nobody knows, unless it be that meekness is one of the traits of character which it is supposed to symbolize. The amethyst is sometimes used, but not often, as it is supposed to represent placidity and coldness. The sapphire is used for engagement rings, as it is considered an emblem of virgin love, and is supposed to guard the innocent against the inclinations of the evil. But as the sapphire does not light up very well, it is customary to put a diamond in the ring along with it. The two make a beautiful combination, and, taken together, they are supposed to be the emblems of faith and constancy. If your means will not permit you to buy an engagement ring adorned with both a diamond and a sapphire, then you can choose either stone for the purpose, and the ring will be appropriate.